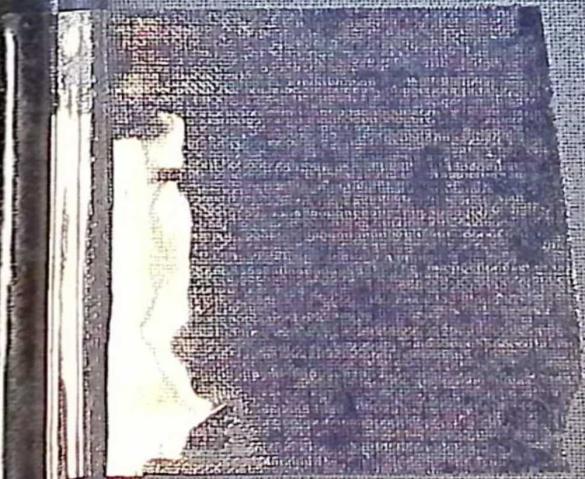
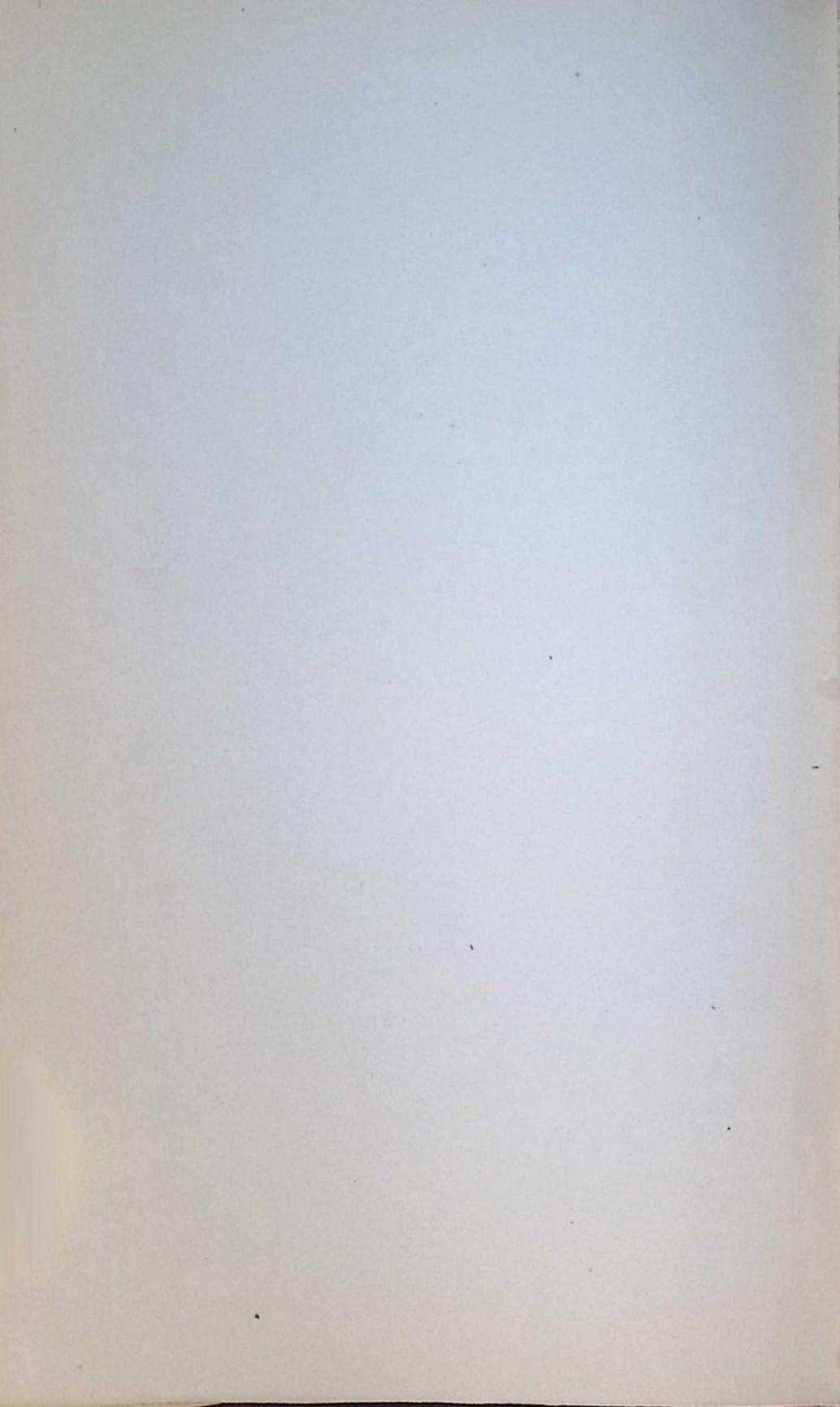


AN INQUIRY  
INTO  
OUR NEED OF THE  
GRACE OF GOD

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W. S. PLUMER BRYAN





AN INQUIRY INTO  
OUR NEED OF THE GRACE OF GOD



W. S. PLUMER BRYAN, D.D.

# An Inquiry Into Our Need OF The Grace of God

*Lectures Delivered in 1917  
on the Thomas Smyth Foundation at the Columbia Theological  
Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United  
States, then in Columbia, South Carolina.*



BY W. S. PLUMER BRYAN, D.D.

LATE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF THE COVENANT, CHICAGO

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1937

PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION

*Presbyterian Church in the United States*

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

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TO  
ALICE REID BRYAN  
WHOSE UNFALTERING DEVOTION TO HIM AND  
UNSWERVING FAITH IN HIM  
THROUGH THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS  
OF  
MARRIED LIFE  
MADE POSSIBLE THIS BOOK AND MANY  
MORE OF THE ABUNDANT LABORS  
OF THE AUTHOR  
W. S. PLUMER BRYAN

Bethel 8/28/38 F.C.B. 1.40



## PREFACE

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ONE WHO is at all familiar with the literature of human nature will realize that it is of very great extent and covers a variety of special subjects. Its animal, its mental, its social, and its religious aspects all have place in that literature, which is a library in itself. Great as it has always been, it is today greater than ever before, and he is a rare man who is familiar with it as a whole.

The subject, of course, divides and subdivides. Human nature as it came to be, human nature as it ought to be and may become, are subjects quite separable from human nature as it is. Even this is too large a subject. If one turns his attention to human nature as it is in relation to God, he still finds the subject too large. The theme of this volume is human nature as it is in relation to the grace of God. This theme has called forth many valuable treatises, and the older ones have not lost their value in the presence of the later ones. The future doubtless will bring other treatises written in the light of later information as to the facts in the case.

The author has been brought to believe that, before another such treatise of real value is written, these facts ought to be inquired into. If modern progress has lifted human nature above the need of the grace of God, we ought to know it. If in spite of modern progress, this need persists, we must be reassured of that. If modern

progress has served only to emphasize that need, we are not true to ourselves unless we recognize this. These facts can be ascertained only by inquiry. The purpose, therefore, of the author is not to offer another treatise, but to enter upon this inquiry.

This purpose will, perhaps, explain the form of this volume as to the series of questions it proposes at different points for the purpose of eliciting definite opinions. It may also justify the space given to citations from other authors. They constitute a selection made with three ends in view. One is to give to general readers some acquaintance with the variety and the conflict of opinion on this subject; for those who are familiar only with a book or two, however valuable these be, have no conception of the variety of opinion. Another end in view is, in questioning the views of an author, to afford him space, however brief, in which to speak for himself. The other reason is, to indicate in some degree the mass of evidence to be found in the literature of our day that establishes our need of the grace of God. That some of this evidence is given without intention makes it that much more valuable.

An inquiry such as this will be received by the readers of today with conflicting sentiments. The mention of grace, especially of the need of grace, brings to some merely the reminiscence of what was once real but now is entirely cast out of their mental category. To others, it reminds only of battles, once fought with vigor and with bitterness and now happily forgotten. Others yet recall an experience, precious at the time and now

dimmed, if not lost, by other and later experiences that are very far from precious. Then there are those who know only the present and have no reminiscences and no reminders and no experience, but only the sense of a great void in life which nothing has filled. This effort will not altogether fail of its aim, if it awakens among them a sense of the need of grace.

On the other side are those whose experience has left them no doubt of their need, but who by the persistent challenges of certain types of thinkers have been led to doubt these experiences and to force themselves to believe that they are without solid basis. If these pages shall serve to reaffirm and, in the light of the latest thought, to deepen that sense of the need of the grace of God, they will have served their purpose.

The author cannot refrain from confessing the results of this inquiry within himself. From his young manhood, the great truths of science and philosophy and religion have stood out clear and distinct in his mind; but many of them have stood alone, like solitary mountain peaks against the sky line. The connecting ranges between peak and peak did not appear to his mental vision. Now, in his later years, those connecting ranges have come out and he has been given to see something of the great unity of truth. Writing under such an impulse, he is reminded of those words of the late Dr. R. W. Dale of Birmingham (*Life*, p. 620)—words noble in their humility, and true whatever we may think of his conclusions—when, writing to a friend, he said:

"You are good enough to say some kind things about my lectures on the Atonement; but it seems to me as if that book and other books which by God's blessing have been of service, never came from me; I seem to have had no part in them except to diminish their power; and there is something distressing at times in what my people are saying about what they owe to me. I know that it is not to me they owe anything; God has blessed them in spite of me."

This inquiry finds solid ground in the testimony of consciousness and this as corrected and confirmed by reflection, and this as still further corrected and confirmed and then illuminated by Holy Scripture. It recognizes the conflicts that rage around consciousness as a center and the issue that is presented as between skepticism and certainty. Those who live outside the range of these conflicts will naturally judge that undue space has been allotted to them. On the other hand, those who are hard pressed in these conflicts may find at least some help from these pages. Criticism is to be expected at every stage of the inquiry, and this with increasing force as it approaches the findings.

The author commends his volume to those who realize their need of the grace of God, but more especially to those who feel no need of it at all. He cherishes the hope that the younger thinkers of our day may find its processes valid and its conclusions sound and that, from these, they may go on to conclusions broader, deeper, and more satisfying to the spirit of man than any which have yet come within his view.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

BY THE AUTHOR'S ELDER SON



As the title page indicates, these lectures were delivered in 1917 in Columbia, South Carolina, at the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, on the Thomas Smyth Foundation.

Father accepted the invitation to lecture, fully conscious of the high honor. In 1911 then President Francis Landey Patton, D.D., LL.D., Princeton, N. J., had inaugurated the Lectures. Dr. Robert E. Speer, New York, had lectured in 1913. Following father, Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield, Princeton, N. J., Dr. James I. Vance, Nashville, Tenn., Dr. J. Gresham Machen, then of Princeton, N. J., Dr. Charles R. Erdman, Princeton, N. J., and Dr. William C. Covert, Philadelphia, Pa., lectured on the same foundation.

Not only the distinguished lecturers made the invitation a high honor, but also the fact that Columbia, his Alma Mater, considered him worthy of it. I can well recall the concentrated toil of preparation for the lectures, as well as the delight he had in delivering them. Not satisfied with offering them as they were, father continued his studies, keeping abreast with the latest publications on grace and allied subjects until 1925, when, with the material practically completed, he was called to higher service.

The publication has been long delayed, which members of his family regret. It has proved necessary to

abridge the original manuscript by one half to one third. Those who heard the lectures will, however, find them fuller than as given in their oral form. Notes prepared by Dr. Bryan that illuminate the text must also be omitted. But they are available in mimeographed pamphlet form without cost upon request made to the manuscript's editor, The Manse, Salem, N. J. The titles of the Notes are:

#### NOTES

1. Different Kinds of Laws.
2. "The Law of Nature" in History.
3. The Various Senses of the Word "Law."
4. Recent Judicial Decisions as to Liberty and Responsibility.
5. The Law of God in Its Original Form.
6. Ritschl's Theory of Moral Law and His Conclusions.
7. Some Recent Valuations of the Law of God.
8. Love and Grace.
9. Legal Fictions.
10. Recent Criticism of the Federal Theology.
11. The Hindu Attitude Toward Sin.
12. The Word "Evangelical."

Dr. Bryan included in his Preface "acknowledgments to those who have kindly aided the author with their suggestions and especially with their criticisms of his work." The names of those whom he wished to thank in this way have not been found. The manuscript's editor remembers that the author was grateful for the review of the manuscript by Professor Ladd, of Yale University, and Professor Clarence Bouma, Th.D., of Grand Rapids, Mich. There are doubtless many others, who will forgive, we trust, the omission of acknowledgments,

occasioned by the special circumstances attending the delay in publication.

Thanks are due to the Rev. Edgar M. Wilson, of Los Angeles, Cal., for a preliminary editing of the manuscript. He writes, "The present volume is only an introduction to the subject of the Grace of God. Dr. Bryan apparently had in mind a second volume. To a friend he wrote: 'The volume is really the prolegomena to the subject of grace in its various relations, the material for which has been in hand for some time.' "

The Rev. Professor Andrew C. Zenos, D.D., LL.D., of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago, rendered invaluable assistance in abridging the manuscript and in preparing it for publication. The Rev. John E. Kuizenga, D.D., of the Seminary, Princeton, N. J., graciously read the manuscript at the request of the editor and offered his advice.

Thanks are due to Harper & Brothers for permission to quote from James Moffatt, "The Bible: A New Translation," Revised Edition (1935), and to the International Council of Religious Education for permission to quote from the American Standard Version of the Bible. Brief quotations from Ballantine's "Riverside New Testament," 1923, Goodspeed's "New Testament, An American Translation," 1923, and Weymouth's "New Testament in Modern Speech," 1909, may be noted.

Special difficulties are likely to attend the publication of a posthumous work. The editor wishes to record his deep appreciation of the courtesy and consideration

unfailingly accorded by the publishers, The Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Virginia.

It seems appropriate that the lectures should be published in the south by the Publication Committee of the Church under the auspices of one of whose Seminaries they were delivered. It was in the south that Dr. Bryan received his college and seminary education and in the south that the first fourteen years of his ministry were offered. The last thirty-three years of his life were given to the Presbyterian Church in the north. May this book written out of his experience of the grace of God, both in the south and in the north, lead many in both sections to a clearer understanding of and a deeper joy in that grace.

—ALISON REID BRYAN.

*The Manse, Salem, New Jersey,  
June, 1937.*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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### TRANSLATIONS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE OTHER THAN THE AUTHORIZED VERSION

A—*American Standard Version of the New Testament*, 1900.

B—*Ballantine's Riverside New Testament*, 1923.

G—*Goodspeed's The New Testament: An American Translation*, 1923.

M—*Moffatt's A New Translation of the Old Testament*, 1924; *A New Translation of the New Testament*, 1913.

R—*Revised Version of the Holy Scriptures*, 1885.

W—*Weymouth's New Testament in Modern Speech*, 1909.

### WORKS OF REFERENCE

DAC—*Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, Hastings.

DCB—*Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Smith-Wace.

DCG—*Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, Hastings.

DDB—*Dictionary of the Bible*, Davis.

DRE—*Dictionary of Religion and Ethics*, Smith-Mathews.

EB—*Encyclopedia Britannica*.

ERE—*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Hastings.

HBD—*Dictionary of the Bible*, Hastings.

ISBE—*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Orr.

SBD—*Standard Bible Dictionary*, Jacobus-Nourse-Zenos.

### PERIODICALS

AJT—*American Journal of Theology*.

APS—*American Philosophical Society*.

AM—*Atlantic Monthly*.

BW—*British Weekly*.

CQ—*Constructive Quarterly*.

HJ—*Hibbert Journal*.

LQ—*Lutheran Quarterly*.

PR—*Princeton Review*.

PRR—*Presbyterian and Reformed Review*.

Psych. Rev.—*Psychological Review*.

PTR—*Princeton Theological Review*.

YR—*Yale Review*.



AN INQUIRY INTO  
OUR NEED OF THE GRACE OF GOD

EXCERPTS FROM "WHO'S WHO"

1924-1925

Rev. W. S. Plumer Bryan, born Alleghany City, Pa. . . . .	Aug. 30, 1856
Son of Samuel S. and Kate Plumer Bryan	
A.B., Davidson College . . . . .	1875
A.M., Davidson College . . . . .	1878
Graduated Columbia, S. C., Theological Seminary . . .	1878
D.D., Centre College . . . . .	1892
Married December 1 . . . . .	1887
Ordained to Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in U. S.	1878
Pastor of Presbyterian Church in Randolph County, W. Va. . . . .	1878 to 1887
Pastor of Presbyterian Church, Asheville, N. C. .	1887 to 1892
Pastor of Second Church (later Church of the Covenant), Cincinnati, Ohio . . . . .	1892 to 1895
Pastor of Church of the Covenant, Chicago . . . . .	Sept. 1, 1895, to May, 1925
Lecturer on the Smyth Foundation, Columbia Theo- logical Seminary, S. C. . . . .	1917
President of the Presbyterian Home in Chicago	
Died . . . . .	May 28, 1925

W. S. PLUMER BRYAN, 1856-1925

*"Reaching forth . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*



IN the home, as a growing boy I admired father. I thought him perfect. The realization that no one could be perfect, not even my minister-father, came with a shock I can still recall. Today, as a father myself, I ask with vital interest the question, What won my admiration? His unfailing thoughtfulness; his apparently natural unselfishness in the home; the dignity and spiritual atmosphere with which he clothed the worship of God in the church; his kindness in Sabbath school, in the communicants' class; his friendly, sympathetic way of meeting the young couples who came to the home to be married, the poor who came to be helped; his humour and his geniality coming to the surface on a Lake Michigan fishing trip in the company of his brother ministers, or at home when his brethren of the pastorate and Seminary met in Cleric, and rallied one another in the freedom of good comradeship. Was it not reasons like these that account for my admiration?

Later, I was critical of father. What child is not? This is not the place to list the grounds real or imagined. Most of the criticism can be traced to his absorption in his work, which left him little time for the recreations

and pursuits in which youth would have had him share. It was this very devotion to his work that inspired my admiration when I had entered upon my own lifework. Father did not always enjoy robust health. For most of his life he suffered every summer from hay fever and asthma. Yet time and again he kept himself unremittingly at his work, his sermon preparation, his daily pastoral calling, his committee responsibilities, a large correspondence, a wide reading. By careful, persistent effort from his student days, he cultivated self-discipline. He might have said with the apostle Paul, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."

In the month of May, 1918, he preached in the Church of the Covenant, Chicago, a sermon commemorating his forty years in the ministry. "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna . . . that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only . . ." Using this passage from the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy as the basis of his sermon, he spoke out of his own intensely vivid forty years' experience of God's Leading, God's Humbling, God's Keeping, and God's Token.

Those who knew Plumer Bryan can testify that in his life and ministry he was not deceived in his conviction that though God frequently humbled him, he led and kept him, giving him tokens that man lives by the Word,

the living Word of God. Not by word only, but by deeds, his life revealed concentrated effort, high aspiration. "Reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

The apostle Paul writes to thank his friends in Philippi for gifts they had sent him in his need. He describes the gifts in terms—as translated by Moffatt—that all who loved and admired Plumer Bryan will not feel unsuitable as applied to his service of Christ, "a fragrant perfume, the sort of sacrifice that God approves and welcomes."

Friends of his student days, friends who knew him in West Virginia, in Asheville, North Carolina, in Chicago—in church, in presbytery, and in synod—have graciously contributed reminiscences. They serve as a fitting introduction of the author to those who did not know him, and as a vivid reminder for those who did know him.

The Rev. Alexander Sprunt, pastor for thirty-five years of the First Presbyterian Church, Charleston, South Carolina, retiring in 1936, writes as follows to Dr. Bryan's eldest son: "Your father and I were classmates in Davidson College, North Carolina. He was a very studious and most conscientious young man, and stood well in scholarship and in the estimate of his classmates. He had a remarkable memory and with hard study it served him well. He did not seem to take much interest in athletics, as this writer remembers, but was ever full of life and never lacking in devotion to duty.

Your father was industrious as pastor in the midst of a people entirely different from his rearing and associations, but devoted to him." This is a reference to his work in the mountains of West Virginia. Dr. Sprunt concludes by saying that after fifty-eight years in the ministry he is resigning his pastorate.

From another classmate, the Rev. R. S. Burwell, D.D., graduating from Davidson in the year 1875, comes this reminiscence: "Dr. Bryan was a most diligent student, and always a courteous and cordial gentleman and friend. We worked together in the laboratory under Dr. W. J. Martin, Sr."

The Rev. J. E. Booker, of Hampden-Sydney, Virginia, writes of his association with Dr. Bryan in Virginia and West Virginia:

"We were drawn very close to each other in the early years of our ministry, having been associated for about eight years, he as a Home Missionary in Lexington Presbytery in Tygart's Valley across the mountains in the depths of the Alleghanies in West Virginia, and I in the same Presbytery as pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Staunton, Virginia.

"He always came to the regular meetings of the Presbytery twice a year in the Shenandoah Valley, and generally stayed with us whenever he rode across the Alleghanies on his white pony, a tough product of West Virginia. During his last years there, he came oftener to Staunton as he was paying attention to your mother, then a very attractive young lady.

"As a friend he was affectionate, as a presbyter he was

marked for his good judgment, and became one of the leaders in the presbytery. As a missionary he was aggressive, and always practical. The result of the work which he did in association with others in that destitute part of the Alleghanies was very far reaching, and finally led to the organization of a new presbytery, that of Tygart's Valley, and years after that, to the organization of the new Synod of West Virginia.

"As a pastor among those mountaineers he was pre-eminently successful. In eight years he gathered together a good congregation of attentive hearers, and built one of the most imposing and beautiful church buildings in that whole section. It could be seen far up and down the Valley.

"It has been a long time since your father left that mission work, but we see the marks of his work to this day. It has been about fifty years since I saw him. I am now eighty-seven years old."

Mr. Frederick H. Barron, President of the Tygart's Valley National Bank, Elkins, West Virginia, kindly sends a report of the Session of Tygart's Valley Church, Huttonsville, West Virginia, entitled "*A Century's History of Presbyterianism in Tygart's Valley.*" From this we quote:

"On September 14th, 1878, Mr. W. S. P. Bryan, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Harmony, Synod of South Carolina, preached his first sermon in the Huttonsville schoolhouse, from Deuteronomy 32:10. He was accompanied by the Rev. W. E. Baker, of Staunton, Virginia, a most active member of the Presbyterial Committee of

Home Missions. Mr. Bryan had made an engagement with that Committee to take charge as an evangelist of the churches of Tygart's Valley, Beverly, and Mingo Flats. The first Sabbath services were held in Mill Creek Church on September 15th, 1878, Mr. Bryan preaching from Galatians 2:20. Many predictions were made that the delicate-looking youth would not be able to endure our climate; but, like many other predictions, this was not verified, and a ministry extending till the present writing [1885] sets at naught predictions based on mere appearances.

"On November 18th, 1878, a congregational meeting was held to take definite steps towards the erection of a church. It was decided to build upon a lot given by Messrs. James S. and John Hutton, near Huttonsville. The edifice cost about \$5,000, of which \$2,250 was paid by ten men. Mr. Bryan was received as a licentiate of Lexington Presbytery, from the Presbytery of Harmony, on April 30th, 1879, at Churchville, Virginia, and calls were placed in his hands from the churches of Tygart's Valley, Beverly, and Mingo Flats. He was ordained at an adjourned meeting of Presbytery in Beverly, on June 8th, 1879. There were present Rev. E. D. Junkin, D.D., Rev. G. B. Strickler, D.D., Rev. J. W. Rosebro, Rev. P. Fletcher, Rev. R. Scott, and the Rev. W. S. Plumer, D.D., of the Presbytery of Harmony. Dr. Plumer, grandfather of the candidate, preached the ordination sermon, from 2nd Thessalonians 3:1.

"Mr. Bryan was installed pastor of the Tygart's Valley Church, Huttonsville, on June 15th, 1879, at Mill Creek

Church, Dr. Strickler preaching the sermon. Dr. Junkin delivered the charge to the people, and Dr. Plumer the charge to the pastor.

"In the fall of 1879, the Randolph Female Seminary was organized by the pastor at Huttonsville, to provide for the higher education of young women, according to the views and principles commonly held by the church. This institution was removed to Beverly the year following, where excellent work is being accomplished.

"On February 6th, 1880, special services were begun at the schoolhouse, conducted by the pastor, and continuing for two weeks. A deep religious interest pervaded the community, and twenty-three additions were made to the roll of the church.

"In the fall of 1882 the Randolph Male Academy, which had been organized in Beverly the year previous, was removed to Huttonsville, where it has continued ever since.

"On August 19th, 1883, this church [the Tygart's Valley Church, Huttonsville] resolved to ask leave of Presbytery to amend the call under which the pastor was serving it, and, together with the church of Mingo Flats, to ask for all of his time, the two churches promising to raise \$600 instead of \$300 as under the original call. Mr. Bryan accepted the call as amended. The last sermon preached before the congregation of this church in the schoolhouse, where for seven years or more it had been worshipping, was delivered by the pastor on October 14th, 1883. The first sermon in the new church was delivered by the Rev. S. J. Baird, D.D., on October

19th, 1883. The new edifice was solemnly dedicated to the worship of Almighty God on Sabbath, October 21st. After the sermon, the key of the church was formally received from the Building Committee by the pastor, who then offered the dedicatory prayer, and afterwards delivered the key to the deacons."

Dr. Bryan's successor in the First Presbyterian Church, Asheville, North Carolina, the Rev. R. F. Campbell, D.D., writes of meeting Mr. Bryan for the first time after a seventy-five-mile journey by horse and buggy to Presbytery at Huttonsville, West Virginia. He adds: "That was the beginning of my acquaintance with your father, which ripened into a warm friendship. In the summer of 1886 or 1887 your father was called to the First Presbyterian Church, Asheville, and Mr. Charles Edgar Graham, an elder in this church, came to the meeting of Lexington Presbytery to prosecute the call."

Five years later Dr. Campbell accepted the call to the Asheville Church, and is now rounding out his forty-fourth year as pastor there. He concludes by saying:

"I remember hearing your father once preach from Isaiah 43:1, and on several other occasions, and was always impressed with his intellectual vigor, the force and freshness of his expression, and the spiritual flavor of his sermons. It was said of John Calvin, who preached extemporaneously, that he 'spoke literature.' I think the same thing might be said of your father."

"His pastorate of approximately five years in Asheville was very successful. He had large congregations, and the church grew rapidly under his ministry."

The Rev. Donald MacQueen, a fellow student in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina, writes from Palatka, Florida: "Plumer Bryan, as we knew him, was a fine student and faithful in the performance of his duties, exemplifying in his life and character the teachings of Him whose he was, and whom he served. What wonder that he was called to serve in the high places of the church."

There are two letters from those who heard Dr. Bryan's Lectures on the Smyth Foundation at Columbia, South Carolina. One is from the Rev. James O. Reavis, Field Secretary of Foreign Missions in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, who writes from Nashville, Tennessee, "I cherish grateful recollections of his visit to Columbia, his radiant and gracious personality, his fine voice and clear articulation, his warm heart and glowing animation, as he spoke out of his deep experience on the riches of the Grace of God in Jesus Christ, his Lord and Redeemer."

Another is from the Rev. William T. Riviere, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Victoria, Texas, who was an undergraduate when the lectures were delivered. "I have often felt a strong desire to get hold of Dr. Bryan's lectures again. He emphasized the kindly and loving side of the Divine Sovereignty, as Calvin did; too many so-called Calvinists neglect Grace in their concern about Sovereignty. It seems to me that the lectures will supply a real need as well as express a viewpoint."

For an extended period Dr. Bryan served as Chairman of the Synod Committee, of Illinois, on Christian

Education. The Rev. William M. Hudson, D.D., President of Blackburn College, Carlinville, Illinois, says:

"In the summer of 1912 Blackburn College called me to the presidency. Someone described the institution at that time as 'a much discouraged place of learning.' In the fall meeting of Synod it was my privilege to come in contact with the Rev. W. S. Plumer Bryan, D.D., then chairman of Synod's Committee on Christian Education. He gave me such cordial support from the very beginning that I shall always feel under great obligations to him for his intelligent and inspiring helpfulness.

"We had a big fight at Blackburn. Many of our friends were so discouraged that it was difficult to convince them Blackburn had any future. Dr. Bryan was just the opposite. He had confidence in the enterprise and faith in what we were trying to work out. From 1913, during all the time he continued as chairman of Synod's Committee of Christian Education, he secured through his Committee a substantial appropriation for Blackburn from the Board of Christian Education."

Another part of Dr. Bryan's work as chairman of the Committee of Christian Education, was the establishment of McKinley Memorial Church in the University of Illinois. The Rev. J. Walter Malone, Jr., minister of the church, writes from Champaign, Illinois:

"Your father gave unlimited energy and interest to helping raise a \$60,000 endowment for the McKinley Church for students, given by Senator McKinley in memory of his father. The men who served on this

committee with Dr. Bryan have often remarked how he came to Champaign and kept them up half of the night again and again trying to work out their problems.

"Beginning with nothing they raised this \$60,000 endowment, built the church costing \$30,000, and started this program on its way. They added Presbyterian Hall to their equipment by moving a frame building from the place where the church was to be built, remodeling it to provide accommodations for about twenty-five girls. This was the beginning of the beautiful plant and equipment which we now have.

"We now own eight of the twelve lots in this city block, have added a student center to the church which cost a quarter of a million, and raised a \$400,000 endowment, and have assets exceeding \$800,000."

Not only Rev. Walter Malone, Jr., but the Rev. Martin E. Anderson, D. D., who also served as student pastor, deserves the thanks of the church for this fine university work. Dr. Anderson writes: "I thank God I had the privilege of beginning my active ministry under the direction of your father . . . In spite of the fact that his was a busy pastorate, he took time frequently for committee meetings in regard to our work.

"On one or two occasions I recall that the committee was in session practically all night. Others would seem to tire, but your father remained fresh and bright through the entire session. Whatever he undertook to do, he did with all his might and with the finest of skill. He was not only a great leader and parliamentarian, but an ecclesiastical lawyer second to none in the church.

"I feel that much of the credit for the Westminster Foundation at the University of Illinois should go to Dr. W. S. Plumer Bryan, Chairman of Synod's Committee during the time the foundation was laid."

There are a number who have commented on Dr. Bryan's work as pastor and presbyter through his thirty years in Chicago. The Rev. Henry Seymour Brown, D.D., Superintendent of the Church Extension Board of the Presbytery of Chicago, writes:

"Dr. Bryan was a man with real genius in Presbyterian Law, and an able leader in promoting the cause that was dear to his heart. He took hold of the Westminster Foundation idea at Champaign, and led it to success. He did the same with the Presbyterian Home after a committee had been working on it, I suppose, at least ten years or more. He assumed the leadership and the thing was done. He had severed his connections with the Church Extension Board when I began my work with it. He was what I would call 'a high churchman.' He had a very high sense of the dignity and the responsibility of the Presbyterian Church.

"When I was pastor at Lakeview, Chicago, I tried to persuade your father to move the Church of the Covenant up to the Lakeview corner and merge the two. I told him that I would be glad to take second place as his associate. He was a bit afraid, I think. Perhaps he didn't at that time see what was inevitable in the case of the Church of the Covenant.

"The church lost a great leader in his going, a man who always served with remarkable fidelity and self-

sacrifice in any program of the church to which he laid his hand."

The Rev. Norman B. Barr, D.D., Superintendent of the Olivet Institute, Chicago, out of long experience in the Presbytery writes as follows:

"It was my privilege and benefit to associate and serve in Chicago Presbytery with Dr. Bryan, in the work of Olivet Institute Church, to a limited extent.

"In a series of meetings held in his church, I, by his invitation, once preached a sermon which he heartily approved, and for which he commended me highly, though I was considered by him and others of his theological point of view a bit 'liberal,' which meant 'unorthodox.'

"Whatever difference there was between my 'unorthodoxy' and his 'orthodoxy' was ultimately removed by my remark to him, that I considered myself more orthodox than himself, that mine was a first-century orthodoxy, while his was sixteenth-century—the first-century orthodoxy decolored and deformed by Roman Catholic theological and political thinking. After that Dr. Bryan gave me his fullest confidence and co-operation, which I needed and appreciated.

"For many of the last years of the life of Dr. Bryan, Olivet had no truer or more helpful friend and fellow worker than he. It was due to my insistence before presbytery that Olivet ought not to have to carry the Old People's Home load for all of the churches of presbytery, that Dr. Bryan championed my argument, and got for himself, as makers of motions usually do, the

not unwelcome, though unexpected job of chief promoter and soon President of the Chicago Presbyterian Home for Old People. For some time Mrs. Barr and I were identified with the Board of Directors, and with the Women's Auxiliary Board, of which latter Mrs. Barr has ever since been a member.

"Dr. Bryan was not only a 'self-starter,' but a 'starter' of others, a 'natural-born' leader, not a dictator, although sometimes accused thereof. No one was more democratically minded than he as to organization work. His own energy and clarity of mind started the 'brethren' who were less alive to needed action. One of the many things he started while in Chicago Presbytery was the Northside Ministers' Fellowship, composed only of ministers of Northside Presbyterian congregations. He was a member, with myself and others, of the Cleric, composed one-half of ministers of Presbyterian congregations, and one-half of professors of the McCormick (now Presbyterian) Seminary. The benefits of the Cleric were so evident that Dr. Bryan conceived the idea of extending them to all ministers of Presbyterian congregations on the Northside of the City. The pattern of the 'Fellowship' included prayer all around, kneeling at the opening of each session.

"In character, Dr. Bryan was as precise and prim as in his toilet, and in manners. In the latter, he was of the Southern school of gentlemen, which made him on that account, as on many others, an outstanding person in Chicago Presbytery. That composure of the schooled gentleman, Dr. Bryan kept in argument and debate on

the floor of Presbytery as in all other groups in which I have ever met him. Though others got 'hot,' Dr. Bryan remained 'as cool as a cucumber,' and as collected as the solid earth on which he stood with both feet, while his head towered into the less 'collected' heaven.

"His character and conduct, as his thinking and feeling, arose out of the theology which mastered him, a Biblical theology, influenced, some of us felt, too much by the Old and not enough by the New Testament. For him the Bible was one Book, all of a piece, to be taken one sentence and phrase with another, equally as the mind of God and the voice of Heaven. He did not admit 'evolution' in the production of the written any more than in the wrought Word of God. The Bible and Nature for him existed as the perfect work of God, in all its parts, equally perfect despite any imperfections of the men through whose lives and lips and hands God gave us His written Word.

"Departures from this 'orthodoxy' greatly distressed, though they seemed not to disturb him. He was too solid-minded theologically to be disturbed by the thinking of anyone else, however unorthodox they seemed to be. As a preacher there was none his equal in Chicago Presbytery, for not only orthodoxy, but timeliness and appropriateness of content, and pleasantness of manner and of voice, in delivery of his messages which made one feel they were from far above Dr. Bryan himself.

"Dr. Bryan was a Churchman, and a Calvinist-of-Calvinists type of Presbyterian Churchman. He had the confidence that many of those who call themselves 'lib-

erals' seem to have lost, namely that in and through the Church, Christ the Head will yet answer the prayer He taught us, 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.' To-day, those who are 'called to be Christ's,' many of them, seem to have lost hope, if they ever had it, that it is chiefly in and through the Church of Christ that God has established all around that 'Kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.' For Dr. Bryan there was 'none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,' and for him 'the body of Christ,' the Church of Christ, the dominant agent, is being continually reconstructed and perfected for this redemptive work carried on by the indwelling Spirit of God.

"It is probable that Dr. Bryan, at least in the opinion of one so-called 'liberal,' but orthodox with the orthodoxy of the days of Jesus and His first Apostles, was of more worth to the kingdom of God, and the Church of Christ, its imperfect manifestation on earth, than most of us 'liberals,' especially those of us who have lost confidence in the Church as the 'body of Christ,' who is the ultimate Redeemer of mankind from its sins. 'Where sin abounds,' Dr. Bryan truly and fully believed, 'grace doth much more abound.' "

Three men with whom Dr. Bryan was intimately associated in Presbytery, and in other work of the Church, have been kind in putting down some of their reminiscences. One of these, Dr. Andrew C. Zenos, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Chicago, known and loved by all the alumni of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary,

in which he has so long and honorable a record as professor, writes as follows:

"In October, 1894, the Church of the Covenant in Chicago was vacated by the dissolution of the relations between Dr. David R. Breed and itself on the occasion of the removal of Dr. Breed to the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. The church had been organized in May, 1885, and was located at the southeastern corner of the crossing of North Halsted Street and Belden Avenue, just across from the campus of the McCormick Theological Seminary. Dr. Breed had served as its first and only pastor. Its field was unique. It served as the centre and rallying point of the community constituted by the faculty and students of the Theological Seminary. It was designed, of course, to serve the community as a whole, but its nucleus and major element was the Seminary constituency.

"To secure a suitable successor to Dr. Breed, who was rarely qualified to meet the demands of the church so made up, was not an easy undertaking. After a search of between four and five months, however, the man was found in the person of the Rev. W. S. Plumer Bryan, D.D., the young and gifted pastor of a church in Cincinnati.

"When Dr. Bryan came to the field, and was duly installed, March 3, 1895, it was at once realized that here was a man whose light could not, and should not, be hid under a bushel. Without the usual and sometimes unnecessarily prolonged hesitation and testing, he was called upon for service in the work of the Presbytery.

"In the first place, however, it must be noted that Dr. Bryan never allowed his time and attention to be distracted from any duties in his parish that called for prompt action. His obligations to the individual congregation he was called to lead were his first care. He worked hard for his pulpit. He was ambitious to make his sermons fundamentally Scriptural. He had been trained in the methods of Biblical study and exposition predominant at the time in the standard theological seminaries of the Evangelical denominations, and he gave his people the results of these studies with special emphasis on the practical application of the gospel to the experiences and emergencies of life. The predominant note of his preaching was the challenge to his hearers to look upon their relations with God and Jesus Christ with seriousness; to begin and continue their Christian living with correct ideas about life and salvation. Doctrinal preaching, which had begun to lose somewhat of its hold in the average pulpit, was quite conspicuous in his ministrations. He made no effort of any kind to win people by flashy rhetoric, or oratorical display. He used plain and direct language, but he used it with distinguished grace, and command of its possibilities as a medium of conveying vital thought. It was always worth while to listen to him, for his meaning was never lost in any mazes of phraseology, woven together for their own charm.

"As a pastor, also, Dr. Bryan was extremely conscientious in meeting all his obligations to his flock. Not many outside of the inner circle of his friends fully ap-

preciated the thoroughness of his identification with his people and his sacrifices for their sake.

"His spiritual leadership was of the priestly type. Where other ministers often hesitate to direct the conscience of the weak, he would, if there were any chance of his helping them, venture to give authoritative guidance. This may at times have aroused the resentment of those who could have questioned his authority, but perhaps oftener it helped the subjects to feel firm ground under their feet, and avoid serious mistakes.

"As an executive, Dr. Bryan was distinguished for his rare ability to master details in complicated situations. When this was discovered by his fellow presbyters, it led them to commit to him some of the most perplexing questions, also some of the most important projects which emerged in the life of the Presbytery during the thirty years of his connection with it.

"Two such cases were judicial trials, which he was appointed to prosecute. In both of them his full acquaintance with the process of adjudication and his careful conduct of these processes resulted in tiding over the difficulties with the least amount of waste on the part of the Presbytery.

"The first of the administrative projects entrusted to him to carry through for the Presbytery was that of re-organizing the work of its Education Committee, of which he was made chairman. This work consisted mainly in supervising candidates for the ministry under the care of Presbytery. The presence of the Theological Seminary within the boundaries of the Chicago Presby-

tery had developed a natural increase in the number of candidates. This made it necessary to elaborate the provisions for their supervision and examination. In conducting this work, Dr. Bryan asked for a larger share on the docket of the meetings of Presbytery. As the years have gone by, later committees on candidates and licentiates have thus had high ideals to maintain and today this work is done to the great satisfaction of all those concerned.

"Another feature of the Presbytery's work committed largely to Dr. Bryan's care and guidance was the organization of the Executive Council of the Presbytery. The law in effect today in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which enables the General Assembly, the Synods and the Presbyteries to take care of the interests entrusted to them through General Councils in a more efficient manner than the older scheme of 'Standing' and 'Special' committees, was necessitated by the rapid multiplication in the late nineties of special causes appealing to these judicatories for attention and assistance. In the larger city presbyteries special problems of 'Church Extension' and 'Social Service' seriously aggravated the difficulty of the situation. The Presbytery of Chicago was one of the first, if not the first, to inaugurate a plan for relieving this pressure. In 1913 it established a committee under the name of 'The Moderator's Council.' In less than two years' time, the Presbytery's experiments with the Moderator's Council so impressively demonstrated the necessity of a more systematic way of dealing with the situation that it erected a committee

to reorganize the Moderator's Council. It was in this particular work of organization that Dr. Bryan's genius was again brought to the service of Presbytery, and proved of incalculable value. The fine definitions of the work of the Executive Council, the careful and apt working of its rules, the punctilious limitation of its authority to harmonize with the Constitution of the Church at large, all these features, which for twenty years have needed but little, and that simply verbal, revision, are the results of Dr. Bryan's contribution to the work.

"Dr. Bryan was respected and honored by the Presbyterian constituency of Chicago in general. He served on the Church Extension Board and on many other allied organizations. He was honored by the Presbytery, by election to its moderatorship in 1907."

One of those who spoke at the Memorial Service for Dr. Bryan in May, 1925, was his long-time friend and neighbor, the Rev. George L. Robinson, D. D., Professor in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago. The following is a part of the address he gave at that time.

"It was in 1896 that I first met Dr. Bryan, when, upon my first visit to McCormick Seminary, he invited me to be a guest in his home. Our fellowship was happy and has never been forgotten.

"Last Tuesday evening, when he telephoned me from the Hospital asking my assistance in arranging for pulpit supplies, I was little aware that it was to be our last

conversation together. But he was evidently 'setting his house in order.'

"In attempting to give an estimate of our friend, I am choosing language carefully weighed:

"Dr. Bryan was a great man. He was possessed of a rich inheritance. His grandfather, Dr. Plumer, was a celebrated theologian of national fame. He inherited his grandfather's outstanding characteristic, 'firm as Gibraltar.'

"In character, he was a man of God, and wore all the dignity of a true Christian minister. His home was an index of his devotion. When he entertained his fellow members of 'the Cleric' they obtained a glimpse of true Southern hospitality. Though he was an American and an ardent patriot, yet he gave his elder son to India.

"His character shone out most conspicuously in his theology. Above all else that can be said of Dr. Bryan, he was a scholar and a theologian of the first rank. He was a champion of revealed truth, a guardian of the 'Divine Deposit.' He was adamantine in his philosophy of Christianity. His personal faith was well buttressed by a thorough knowledge of, and a firm belief in, the Bible. Though the 'justice' of God was especially emphasized by him in his thinking and preaching, yet when he was invited to give a course of lectures at his Alma Mater, he chose as his theme 'The Grace of God.'

"He was particularly acute in his theological discriminations, but equally careful in coupling practical works with Christian faith. For example, two of the most important projects which the Synod of Illinois and Chi-

icago Presbytery have undertaken during the past thirty-five years were championed by him: namely, the McKinley Memorial Foundation at the University of Illinois, and the Old People's Home at Evanston. He was the leader and promoter of both.

"Dr. Bryan was a 'fundamentalist,' but not of the literalistic, premillenarian type. He was too scholarly to accept of the vagaries of dispensationalism. On the other hand, he saw the inevitable logic of certain modern tendencies in criticism and philosophy. Being a great reader, and an independent thinker, he was thoroughly able to judge of the difference between the wheat and the chaff in modern belief. In short, he was a specialist among contemporaneous amateurs, and *facile princeps* in his judicial evaluation of doctrine.

"Such a man is seldom appreciated till after he is gone. This was true of Dr. Bryan. But his influence, felt to a degree while still living, is more and more appreciated by those who knew him best and loved him most."

Representing the active pastorate of the Presbytery, the Rev. William Chalmers Covert, D.D., former pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Chicago, and recently retired from the General Secretaryship of the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, with whom Dr. Bryan had a warm friendship, writes as follows:

"In the many conferences with Dr. Bryan through the years I found him so deeply interested and concerned in the thing about which at the moment he was conferring, that I drew the conclusion that it was his major life interest. As I recall my many serious contacts with

him through the years, I am amazed at the tirelessness with which he gave himself to meeting the innumerable obligations in his wide field of church work.

"My first contacts were in the early years of the present century, about 1903-1904, and in connection with the very lively debates concerning the theological positions of McCormick Seminary as she faced the then critical discussion of 'The Higher Criticism' in its relation to the Biblical records. There were differences of opinion on the Board where members held to the same doctrinal beliefs but insisted on the liberty of private interpretation as the conscience and the Holy Spirit might direct. The crisis came when Dr. James S. Riggs, of Auburn Theological Seminary, was recommended to the Chair of New Testament Greek. Professor Riggs was known as a devout scholar of the school favorable to 'higher criticism' and willing to abide by its results. The conscience of Dr. Bryan would not allow him to concur in the election of Dr. Riggs. With carefully prepared arguments couched in the most courteous and brotherly language he registered his unyielding opposition. The debate gave me as a new member of the Board my first understanding of the width of Dr. Bryan's Biblical scholarship and theological reading and his firm rigidity and literalness in the interpretation of the Scriptures and the standards of our church. I voted against Dr. Bryan's report, but then and there saw for the first time that at which I increasingly marveled in Dr. Bryan as the years went by, namely, his clear and thorough intellectual understanding of any subject he discussed and the chivalry

and restraint with which he debated issues concerning which he had profound convictions. The breach made on that occasion between Dr. Bryan and those of us who constituted the large majority of the Board widened as the issues grew in number. It led later to his retirement from the Board, where he had rendered great service, and to years of anxiety and fear on his part lest the inheritance of McCormick traditions and the fundamentals of our faith as contained in the Standards be underemphasized and imperiled. Later, to our great joy, in the glow of a warm love that always lived in his nature, Dr. Bryan renewed his contact with the Seminary and gave with satisfaction his testimony to his affection for and confidence in his brethren of the Seminary. It was an indication of a mutuality that the years of difference on doctrinal matters had never marred.

"I saw Dr. Bryan facing very critical times in our work among the students at the University of Illinois at Champaign. He was Chairman of the Committee of the Synod of Christian Education. No man ever took his task more seriously. It was a responsibility that he felt deeply. He faced with determination and a sacrificial devotion the spirit of religious indifference and churchlessness on the campus. His unwearied supervision of the work in its early stages was conscientious and thorough. All the while the interest of the family of Senator William B. McKinley was being carefully cultivated. Dr. Bryan gave the assurance the McKinley family wanted as to the deeply religious character of the contacts proposed by the Synod.

"But it seemed to me I never saw the earnestness of Dr. Bryan more determined than in connection with the promotion and maintenance of the Presbyterian Home for the Aged now located near Evanston. There were times when it was a most discouraging prospect and when Board members were well-nigh in despair. The faith and hope of Dr. Bryan never wavered. To the management of the affairs and policies of the Home he gave time and hard, persistent labor. It seemed an outlet for his warm-hearted nature that gave him the greatest satisfaction.

"It was in the informal social fellowship of our Cleric, an organized social group of pastors which had been started about 1875 by Dr. Herrick Johnson and others of his contemporaries, that Dr. Bryan revealed his unusual social inclinations and gifts. We gathered in one another's homes for a paper, discussion, and a dinner on which our housewives lavished their genius and generosity. At Dr. Bryan's turn to entertain he left nothing undone to add to our happiness as his guests. Mrs. Bryan always had some delicacy on the menu that belonged to the traditions of Southern hospitality and gave distinction to her table. As a host Dr. Bryan was gifted in his ability to command the situation with a facetiousness and pleasant raillery that put the whole company in its best mood and gave the occasion an atmosphere of good cheer and fine hospitality. There never was the slightest hesitancy in advancing views opposite to those held by Dr. Bryan on the part of any of us in our Cleric papers, knowing that he was thoroughly able to take care of him-

self and would do so in a most agreeable and entertaining way. There are many memories of this good friend of the years that rise at the mention of his name. For them I am grateful and, I trust, a better man."

Mention has been made of the Presbyterian Home for the Aged, to which Dr. Bryan gave so unstintedly from 1914 to his death in 1925. The Rev. Douglas H. Cornell, D.D., Minister of the Union Church of Glencoe, Illinois, now serving on one of the Boards of the Home, says:

"I can hardly conceive of any part of his fruitful life more enduring or more monumental than his organization of and labors for the Presbyterian Home for the Aged. It is stamped with his personality and must ever remain a most substantial and beneficent memorial to his memory. It continues to grow materially, and as a Christian force in all this region it is of great importance. I cannot recall an annual meeting or a function of any sort related to the Home in which grateful allusion was not made to your father."

The Stated Clerk of Chicago Presbytery, the Rev. Andrew C. Zenos, D.D., adds from his records and memory the following account of Dr. Bryan's connection with the Presbyterian Home:

"The attention of the Presbytery of Chicago was called to the need of a home for 'old people' by the Rev. Norman B. Barr in 1903. Presbytery immediately appointed a committee to consider the matter and advise presbytery about it. A Board of Trustees was entrusted with plans for it.

"The work of the Board, however, did not bring about the desired result and the whole matter had to be re-organized and placed in the hands of a new committee in 1914. It was on this committee that Dr. Bryan was appointed to serve. When almost at once the chairman was incapacitated by illness, Dr. Bryan, acting as vice-chairman, took charge of the direction of the committee's labors and for six years continued in that capacity. When Dr. David H. Jones—now of London, England—at last insisted on withdrawing, Dr. Bryan took full charge, at first as chairman of the committee, and later in 1921 as 'President of the Presbyterian Home.'

"Meantime the Home had been started first by the adoption of the work already begun in the Olivet Institute with the members of it, and next by the opening of a temporary residence in Highland Park for additional applicants for admission.

"Dr. Bryan gave his time and care to the enterprise through the whole period of ten years during which its claims for the support of the Presbyterian public of Chicago had to be repeatedly and forcefully presented.

"The original scheme was conceived in modest terms but it grew and expanded, and Dr. Bryan with untiring zeal and foresight pressed the larger ideal. The sum of \$600,000 fixed in 1920 for the endowment of the Home was augmented to \$800,000 in 1921. The permanent building was completed in 1923 and dedicated with adequate ceremonies under his direction. The organization was expanded from a simple Committee of the Presbytery to a group of semi-independent organizations, in-

cluding an Advisory Board, a regular Board of Directors, a Board of Managers, with a large group of committees administering the details.

"It rarely falls to the lot of a man to contribute as much to a public enterprise without any other compensation than that of his own satisfaction of heart and the grateful recognition of his associates as Dr. Bryan did to this enterprise of Chicago Presbyterianism."

During his thirty years as pastor of the Church of the Covenant, Chicago, his own congregation valued his work, which was never neglected for the other duties that have been mentioned. For them, Mr. Fred W. Allen, President of the Moline State Trust & Savings Bank, Moline, Illinois, speaks. He was the youngest member to be elected to the office of Ruling Elder during Dr. Bryan's pastorate:

"Reverend W. S. Plumer Bryan stands out in my memory as being one of the most remarkable men I have ever known. He was far-seeing in every respect. He stood almost alone in the stand he took with regard to the location of the Presbyterian Home in Evanston, but which has proven to be the most ideally and practically located building of its kind in or around Chicago. Business and residences were drawn to that location and now it is no longer difficult to reach. The institution, of course, speaks for itself.

"While many of his constituents disagreed with him in his method of handling some of his business, including church management, his outstanding executive ability usually proved the correctness of his plan and the

possibility of its being carried out. The devotion felt for him by his congregation is something that will remain in their minds and memories as long as they live.

"W. S. Plumer Bryan was one of my very best and devoted friends, although, as in the case of so many others, this fact is always brought out much more forcibly when they are taken from us than while they are here. My business life has been made so much easier because of the early training I had under W. S. Plumer Bryan, and I shall always consider it one of the richest blessings I have had in life to have known him, to have served him, and to have benefited by his spiritual guidance in my religious, family, and business life."

ALISON REID BRYAN.

Salem, New Jersey,  
May, 1937.

## CHAPTER I

### The Question Stated—Law, Liberty and Grace

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#### I. THE QUESTION STATED

THE GRACE OF GOD, in general terms, is His love for sinful men and His provision, as surprising as it is ample, for their needs. The meaning of it, in all its wealth and charm, can, however, come into view only after we have a measure of the needs which it supplies and are able to take in the situation which appeals to God's love in this special form. That is, before we can hope to know grace, we must learn our need of grace. If our needs be few and simple, grace is something mild and easy. If our needs be great and deep, grace, to meet them, must be a force. If, on close inquiry, our needs are seen to be desperate, grace must be the outpouring of exhaustless love, of infinite wisdom, and of absolute power.

In all ages, the literature of grace has rested broadly on this basis of man's need. It rests there still. Grace is of interest in our day only as this basis is accurately determined in the light of all we know. There is, indeed, no certainty that those who are greatly in need of grace will give attention to such an inquiry as it is now undertaken; but it is beyond doubt that to fail to meet this question fairly will shut the door of their minds tight

against any conclusions to which this inquiry may lead.

The question is:

Is THERE NEED OF GRACE?

A negative answer, it is obvious, will at once adjourn further proceedings indefinitely. In this event, the inquiry is ended before it is begun, and, whatever value it may have in our eyes, it falls dead upon the minds of other men, the very men to whom, had it been conducted fairly, it would have been of absorbing interest.

That is, our inquiry to have value cannot be abstract. It must face the facts and interpret them accurately. In so doing, it will have the right to call on thinking men and women to face the facts which it presents. Doctrines, traditions, conventions, ceremonials, however venerable or popular, have no claim in our day for their own sakes. We dare not assume a need merely to validate a cherished belief. Our age is too engrossed in meeting its problems to give attention to conclusions that are speculative or even merely academic; for the problems are so weighty that we have no time for anything that fails to contribute to the solution of them. If those whose convictions concerning grace and our need of it are fully assured, judge that undue attention is asked for a question which, in their minds, has never been raised, the reply is that this inquiry is undertaken, not so much for their sakes, as for those who have no such delightful assurance and who, in the present flood of religious theories and systems and programmes, are seeking solid ground for thought and action.

*The Answer in the Negative* to this preliminary question is at hand in recent literature. The difficulty is not to find it but to select, from among the many forms in which it has been expressed, one or more sufficiently representative. In such a selection, regard is to be had not only to the scholarly authority of the writer but also to the currency which his writings have won. Some quotations of this negative answer have become almost classical and are familiar to all who concern themselves with the question. Among those which are comparatively recent, is that of Prof. Edward L. Thorndike,<sup>1</sup> who closes his notable volume with these words:

"The original nature of man, as we have seen, has its source far back of reason and morality in the interplay of brute forces; it grows up as an agency to keep men, and especially certain neurones within men's bodies, alive; it is physiologically determined by the character of the synaptic bonds and degrees of readiness to act of these neurones. . . .

"The apostles and soldiers of the ideal in whom service for truth and justice have become the law of life need not despair of human nature, nor pray for a miracle to purge man of his baser elements. They are the sufficient miracle: their lives are the proof that human nature itself can change itself for the better—that the human species can teach itself to think for truth alone and to act for the good of all men."

Dr. John Dewey,<sup>2</sup> in the introduction to his lectures on the West Memorial Foundation of Leland Stanford Junior University, says:

"Man's nature has been regarded with suspicion, with fear, with sour looks, sometimes with enthusiasm for its possibilities but only when these were placed in contrast

<sup>1</sup>*Educational Psychology*, Vol. I, 311-12.

<sup>2</sup>*Human Nature and Conduct*, 1, 10.

with its actualities. It has appeared to be so evilly disposed that the business of morality was to prune and curb it; it would be thought better of, if it could be replaced by something else. It has been supposed that morality would be quite superfluous, were it not for the inherent weakness, bordering on depravity, of human nature. . . .”

In sympathy with these conclusions of recent psychology, Dr. Gerald B. Smith,<sup>3</sup> a professor of “Christian Theology,” writes:

“Protestantism, like Catholicism, has attributed salvation solely to Grace, denying the ‘natural’ capacity of man to please God. Recent developments in theology, based on a psychological and historical study of religion, tend to ascribe to man a larger ‘natural’ capacity for religion. Grace is thus less sharply differentiated from the native aspirations of human experience and the importance of ‘actual’ grace is minimized in liberal theology.”

### THE OBSCURATION OF GRACE

With full recognition of the fact that the grace of God has never been so widely known as now, it is true that grace is in eclipse, as, at intervals in astronomical history, is the sun of the heavens. This experience is familiar. Darkness spreads over the earth at noontime and the ignorant wonder if the end of the world is come. Of course, to those who see no need of grace, the eclipse is total and they do not know that it is only an eclipse soon to pass; but to many of those who do know the need of grace, it is in partial eclipse, in that, honestly, they cannot see the winsomeness, the symmetry, and the power of it. It reminds us of the vision of Isaiah, who, in the midst of Old Testament religion, prophesied

<sup>3</sup>Grace, D. R. E., 189.

(60:2) that darkness should cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, and who (53:2), long before He came who is Grace and Truth, warned men that He should grow up "as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." This was fulfilled in that when He came, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11.)

In view of all this, one who enters upon this inquiry must feel cautious. Certainly he will grow more cautious as he proceeds, and will realize his constant need not only of self-correction but of correction by other independent observers. Further, it becomes almost certain that, among those who follow the inquiry, sharp differences are bound to emerge as to the value of the conclusions which will be reached from stage to stage.

This negation of the need of grace is not, however, a purely modern development. The ancient period witnessed a clear outbreak of the attitude in Pelagianism. A study of the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius and the long-drawn conflict through the Christian centuries is sufficient to show the ever-present problem it has created for the Christian thinker.

This obscuration gives rise to another question, which is:

#### How Is THIS NEED OF GRACE TO BE MADE EVIDENT?

There must be some measure of it, some standard by which our differences may be tested, some starting point

common to all, or at least effective for all, from which we may hope to reach ultimate agreement. Various measures or standards have been proposed from time to time but it is evident that thus far none has been generally accepted in our day. This is due, doubtless, to the fact that the measures and standards proposed have not met the situation. Principal Cunningham had this view when he wrote that "the prosperity of vital personal religion is more closely connected with current views of the needs of sinful men than it is with correct views of the Trinity and the Person of Christ."<sup>4</sup> Today the early creeds, dealing as they do with these high doctrines, are readily accepted and are devoutly recited by men who are fully satisfied with themselves and who assume that God shares in their satisfaction. They are as fully convinced of the perfectibility of their own natures as is any naturalistic philosopher of that of the race itself. It may perhaps be said of them that they thunder with Athanasius and shout with Pelagius. They are specimens of *Eclectic Orthodoxy*, which is impressive at the high points but is angrily repudiated when their own evil state is laid bare. They greet with applause those of today who follow Pelagius and explain this away. Such orthodoxy impresses no one but the devotee himself and his familiars. Discerning men, whether Christian or not, are not deceived by stage thunder, nor by sonorous amens, nor by shouts which cover follies, vices, and even crimes. Such men test doctrines by life, and alas! too often they know the lives of these devotees and

<sup>4</sup>*Historical Theology*, Vol. I, 321.

are reminded of him of whom it was said when he claimed to believe in God: "Thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble." (James 2:19.)

There is a prevailing tendency to discuss the high doctrines of Christianity without reference to the needs they are designed to meet, although it is to be added that this tendency is by no means confined to scholars of this type of belief. Dean Hastings Rashdall<sup>5</sup> is an outstanding illustration of this tendency. He discusses "the terms Atonement, Reconciliation, Justification, Salvation, Redemption, Sanctification," and with great fulness presents Jewish, Roman, Greek, medieval, and modern theories. With due respect to Dr. Rashdall and to the group of like-minded scholars who find such discussions interesting, it is to be said with candor that, outside their group, thinking men, even Christian thinking men, are not impressed. To these, such discussions are doctrinaire, scholastic, even speculative. The theories march by in solemn procession, but the average man is too busy to watch the procession. Where interest appears, it is as if these theories were footballs over which theological athletes struggle, and nothing more. They lack contact with reality, and for this reason men in quest of reality in religion often appear blunt when they turn upon such scholarly writers and ask: Why forgiveness? Why atonement? Why salvation? What has happened that terms like these must be imported into religion? Why use them when we are in quest of peace and purity and good will? Why impose your jargon on

<sup>5</sup>*The Bampton Lectures: The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, 63-124.

us who are not in your school, but in the severe discipline of the school of life?

There are, of course, merry-hearted men who are happy to sweep away these and like terms; but Dean Rashdall and the theologians with him are serious-minded men who know that, were the terms swept away, the stern facts which called them out would remain. These facts are to be faced. The situation is to be dealt with as one outside the order of nature and calling for action from somewhere beyond the horizon of even our modern knowledge. Indeed, we are forced to see that:

#### GRACE IS AN EMERGENCY MEASURE

It has no great interest in metaphysical speculations or abstract philosophy, or mere systems of doctrine, however elaborate. If not pragmatic, grace is severely practical. The only test it recognizes is that of efficiency which, wasting nothing, sparing nothing, accomplishes the end in view. Modern efficiency experts might well take lessons from it. Whatever concern grace has in such high themes as the Trinity and the Deity of Christ arises from the measure in which these contribute to meet the needs of sinful men. Grace, then, is an emergency measure and we must know the emergency it is to meet before we can pass upon the plan of relief proposed. Should that emergency turn out to be a catastrophe, no man who is reasonable and humane would begrudge any effort, however far from the ordinary, or any agency, however high above us, which are invoked to effect the

relief. In such catastrophic emergencies, there is no time to quibble over nice points or to refuse aid because it comes from beyond us, even from the region of the supernatural.

Where is that emergency defined? What is that, apparently forgotten by our generation, which shows our need of grace, then measures it, and then, with loving severity, awakens us to the crisis that is upon us?

## II. LAW, LIBERTY, AND GRACE

### INTRODUCTORY

The last section closed with certain vital questions. *Law*, in one word, is the answer to these questions. To-day, as in days gone by, it reveals the emergency we are in, it furnishes the inventory of the damage done by the catastrophe which has overtaken us, it weighs and measures us and then registers, as on standard scales, our achievements, our futilities, and our liabilities. In short, it shows that there is need of grace, what that need is, and how it is to be made evident. Yet this is not done in one word.

Law, in our day, is a most inviting field of investigation. Its horizons stretch far away, and more and more of the events of life come, day by day, within its range. Yet, in so doing, it develops interesting, if not anomalous, situations. It will appear now as the great discovery of modern times, working revolutionary changes in belief and practice and affording an interpretation of human life that our fathers never guessed. In this light, we, of

course, demand more and more of it. But, at the same time, and, strangely enough, often to the same person, it appears as the repressive, the arbitrary, and thus the implacable foe of liberty and progress. Then, of course, these persons dislike it and cry out against it. In this protest join anarchists and members of society who are quite at home in the parlor in full dress, in the professors' chairs, even of institutions supported out of the revenues of the state, and in pulpits which speak in the name of religion. Whether we can explain this anomaly or not, it is quite certain that neither of these conflicting sources affords any light upon our inquiry. If there be no other, our quest is fruitless. Evidently it will take more than one word, or at least more senses of that word than one, to serve our purpose.

*Law and Laws.* Law is a term which is applied in various senses to a number of loosely related subjects. It is a screen rather than a definition.

One of our recent dictionaries<sup>6</sup> recognizes thirteen different senses of the word, each supported by good usage. Anyone admits the familiar senses of the word such as constitutional law, natural law, the moral law, the Law of Moses, but we find ourselves here only at the entrance to the maze. We come soon upon civil law, and positive law, and commercial law, and criminal law, and maritime law, and Roman law, and canon law. When we take up those laws which bear the name of their discoverers, we scarcely know where to begin; Bell, Boyle, Farraday, Kelvin, Malthus, Marconi, Mendel,

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<sup>6</sup>The New Standard Dictionary.

Newton, Ohm, Pascal, Watt. Where the end is, is hard to say.

*Groups of Meanings.* The difficulty begins to lessen when we see that law is a word not only of different meanings but with various groups of meanings.<sup>7</sup> If we take these in their historic sequence, we shall find them readily distributed as moral, logical, and physical or natural. Moral law covers the fields of religion, ethics, jurisprudence, business, education, and society. Law in logic regulates our thinking by such laws as contradiction, excluded middle, and parsimony. Natural or physical law covers nature, including the fields of chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology, etc. The issue of the present day arises over the effort now being made to extend natural law to cover not only nature but human nature in the studies of psychology, economics, sociology, history, ethics, and religion.

*The Moral and the Physical.* Whatever early usage was,<sup>8</sup> the word law today covers the operations in both the moral order and the physical or natural order. Clear thinking demands that the distinction between the two be set forth sharply and be carried forward in all our discussions. The only exception to this statement is of those who seek to extend the sphere of physical or natural law to include the moral law and thus to interpret all life in the terms of the physical. Even here the distinction cannot be ignored altogether.

This distinction will engage our attention in the com-

<sup>7</sup>Note 1. Different Kinds of Laws.

<sup>8</sup>Note 2. "The Law of Nature" in History.

ing pages. It may be put briefly in the words of Mr. Arthur,<sup>9</sup> who says that moral law is given by one intelligent or moral agent to another intelligent or moral agent. It goes into effect by virtue of the authority of the lawgiver, which authority is his recognized right to command. It assumes, on the part of those subject to it, a capacity for understanding its practical intent and also for complying with or refusing compliance.<sup>10</sup>

In marked contrast, physical law deals with a class of agents that do not know the laws they fulfill; agents that cannot be tempted and cannot be counseled; agents that, if left to themselves, never change, and that, when not left to themselves, meet any action of other agents invariably in the same way, under the same circumstances; agents that know nothing of the other agents that may act upon them, that know not whether they interfere out of their own will or utterly without a will, whether they have designs or no designs.

*Grace in the Realm of Moral Law.* The category of grace as related to law may be assumed without argument to fall into the realm of moral law, and to stand altogether outside of physical law. For in the realm of physical law behavior is apparently automatic and irresponsible, whereas in the moral realm there emerge certain ultimate realities which show behavior to be autonomous rather than automatic.

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<sup>9</sup>On the Difference Between Physical and Moral Law, 51, 109.

<sup>10</sup>Note 3. The Various Senses of the Word "Law."

## LIFE THE SPHERE OF THE ULTIMATE REALITIES

Since the aim of this inquiry is to ascertain our need of the grace of God, an aim essentially religious and one entirely dependent upon a full view of these ultimate realities, the inquiry may be said to be theological in character, dealing with the law of God in its furthest application.

But, this being so, the aim of this inquiry reaches into every phase of human life, where these ultimate realities, one and all, afford the sure basis for public order or government; for art, culture, and education; for finance, commerce, and industry; for society, recreation, and hygiene. Each of these aspects contributes to life only as it is regulated by laws as definite as the laws of thought and the moral law, laws which, disregarded, are bringing to life today pain, shame, and disappointment. Men who have no care for religion, especially for the religion of grace, may not disregard those laws, lest they lose the very phases of life they do care for.

These ultimate realities, so often denied or disregarded, will determine the future course of our inquiry. If we can keep them in view, we will not go far astray; and if in the light of them we push on, despite the hindrances, we will be able to estimate human nature as it is and to determine whether or not it needs the grace of God, and, if so, to what extent.

Each of these ultimate realities implies the others. The first, liberty or freedom, as has been shown, is the sufficient answer to naturalism, is one of the primary assertions of consciousness, and is verified and corrected

in reflection to serve physical science, logic, philosophy, and religion. Having in view its relation to the other two, we ought to recognize what may, perhaps, be called

*The Implicates of Liberty.* These may be stated in general terms as follows:

Liberty of choice is not an abstraction, philosophical or religious. It is the condition of human life in all its aspects, including the political, the ethical, the economic, the ecclesiastical, and the religious.

Liberty is to be defended against license on one hand and against tyranny and anarchy on the other.

Liberty, thus defined, has its limits. The more highly developed it is, the more complicated is its system of restrictions and prohibitions.

Liberty,<sup>11</sup> then, implies and requires as its obverse, responsibility. Liberty says, I can, I will; responsibility says, I must, I ought, it is my duty.

Responsibility, then, is not servitude but the secret of freedom, the source of progress and the key to happiness.

Responsibility implies authority as the protector of liberty.

Authority is the right, together with the power, to define responsibility and so to enforce the demands of liberty and to defend each man in the exercise of his rights. To yield to the voice of authority is not to surrender liberty, but only to define it. To defy authority is to lose liberty in an effort to seize license.

Authority protects each form of liberty according to

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<sup>11</sup>Note 4. *Recent Judicial Decisions as to Liberty and Responsibility.*

its nature. It expresses itself in various forms, involving responsibility. Home, business, state, society, education, church, have each its own authority, and over and above them all is God. These authorities at times conflict, and, when they do, the higher will ultimately prevail.

Authority maintains itself by sanctions sufficient to enforce obedience and to punish disobedience adequately to the end that liberty may be preserved.

These implicates bear directly upon our inquiry and demand immediate attention. In what forms do they manifest themselves?

## CHAPTER II

### Moral Law and Our Need of Grace

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#### INTRODUCTORY

THE MORAL LAW is the form in which these ultimate realities reach us men, and only as they are recognized to be universal and final is it effective. When they are thus recognized, it has all the force that inheres in them. Should the moral law be denied or ignored, no real place in our lives is left for liberty, immortality, or God.

Among these three ultimate realities, liberty is the condition on which moral law becomes operative; immortality is the sphere within which its operations are completed; and God is at once its source and its end.

*The Subjects of the Inquiry.* The limit in the realm of this inquiry consists of human beings without qualification. The company is promiscuous. No reserved seats are in sight. Persons of importance fail of the deference they expect, and nobodies receive full recognition. The chemist and the physicist forget their quarrel. The biologist and the physicist sit side by side with the idealist and the transcendentalist. Pope, bishop, priest, minister, elder, steward, deacon, and layman are on the same level. Corporation officials and financiers crowd in by the side of the "hands" of their factories, mills, and farms. Judges, juries, bailiffs, and attorneys

take seats alongside plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses. Leaders of fashion find next to them dockwalloper and hobos. Reactionaries, conservatives, progressives, liberals, and radicals must get along together despite their differences. Education, culture, profession, income, social standing, offer no advantages. Pure democracy has come despite the dismay of parlor-Democrats. Men are men only and women are women only, for there is no respect of persons. Yet despite the various sights and sounds and odors, the company does not break up. It is gathered not because anyone enjoys all of his contacts but because no one dares stay away, knowing that if he does he will be brought in promptly.

*The Purpose* of the inquiry is not "inspirational" but informative. There is no pomp nor pageantry, indeed there is but scant ceremony, while facts are brought out bearing upon our secret motives and our deeds, hidden and public. Slight regard is had for those conventions by which gentlemen agree not to inquire too closely into the private lives each of the other. Our camaraderies and our liaisons, for some reason, are dragged out into the light, and the impression they make is not reassuring. Small concern is shown for our rights, as we define them, and emphasis is laid on our duties. Talk centers in "ought" and "ought not." It looks as if determinism had never been heard of and men are to be held responsible for what they do and fail to do. And, when it is all over, judgment is handed down with never a question as to whether we think it fair, with consequences that are often quite a tax on our pocketbooks and, what

is worse, a restraint upon our liberty. Yet the purpose seems to hold from age to age.

*The Method* is unique. The scientist finds no time allotted to hear of his latest discovery. The philosopher offers his "reconstruction" in vain. The ecclesiastic forgets his hoods and gowns and stoles and chasubles and chalices and rubrics. The financier finds that here, at least, money does not count, and the politician looks around for something else than votes. The method in use seems to have no place for these things. It is prosaic and even tedious. Statements are made and challenged. Facts are established by testimony. Argument is held down severely to the point at issue. The case is summed up, the decision is announced, and the parties are dismissed to make room for those who are to follow. Fairness, thoroughness, celerity, mark the proceedings, so that there is little to which we can take exception, however great our objections may be.

*The Outcome* is clear. Order, justice, equity, mercy, prevail. The innocent, falsely accused, are vindicated. The oppressed are set free. The underdog has his chance. And, by the same token, shams and frauds are exposed. Culture, wealth, power, are shown up at their true value. Character stands out against the background of the law, and it is true and high and noble or it is base and false and foul. Destiny appears, and it is blessed and glorious or it is cursed and crushing. Whichever it be, none may complain. Full justice is done to each, and none may boast for even the worst is treated far better than he deserves. Such is the moral law. It pervades the world of

persons as the law of gravitation pervades the world of matter. Sometimes it is ignored. Often it is perverted and made the instrument of tyranny, of crime, of vice. Rarely is it freed entirely from the influence of the personal equation. Yet always and everywhere, sooner or later, it makes itself felt for weal or for woe. It enters in its essential principle into the regulations which govern the relations of man to men, of man to institution, of institution to other institutions, and of man and institution to God. It reigns, even if it does not rule, in the life of the family, in the life of the church, and in the life of the state, and in those relationships that have grown up in and among these primal three, which we can assign to no one of them but which share that which is common to them all.

#### VARIETIES OF APPLICATION

The mother and her ceaseless "Do" and "Don't," the schoolteacher with her classbook and class rules, the drill sergeant with his gruff orders to the awkward squad, the corner policeman as he handles the crowd, the fire fighter as he fights the spectators first that he may have room to fight the fire, the road foreman with his "gang," the department manager with his salespeople, the superintendent with his long payroll, the general over his army and the admiral over his navy, the president and the prime minister, the governor and the mayor, over the citizenry—these, one and all, each in his own form and sphere, are maintaining and administering moral law. Every hamlet, village, township, town, city, state,

province, and nation is an illustration, more or less clear, of its orderly operation.

#### PERPETUITY THROUGH TIME

All ages of mankind have given forth their expressions of moral law. At the first moment of free will, it came into action; and amid all the ups and downs of humanity since, from savagery to civilization, it has marked the relations of men. It has been called all sorts of names, it has even been denied a name, but the records serve to show that no race or age of man has been without it. As a sample, we may take the statement of M. de Secondat, Baron of Montesquieu,<sup>1</sup> when in 1689 he named its various forms.

"Men are governed by several kinds of Laws; by the law of Nature; by the Divine Law, which is that of Religion; by ecclesiastical, otherwise called Canon Law, which is that of religious polity; by the Law of Nations, which may be considered as the Civil Law of the whole globe, in which sense every nation is a citizen; by the general Political Law, which relates to that human wisdom whence all societies derive their origin; by the particular Political Law, the object of which is each society; by the Law of Conquest, founded on this, that one nation has been able and willing, or has had a right, to offer violence to another; by the Civil Law of every society, by which a citizen may defend his possessions and his life against the attacks of any other citizen; in fine, by Domestic Law which proceeds from a society's being divided into several families, all of which have need of a particular government."

This statement was made long before the recent sense of the word law had come into use. One looks here in

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<sup>1</sup>*The Spirit of Laws*, Nugent, Vol. II, 144.

vain for any recognition of what we call natural law, and we can see why Dr. Jethro Brown,<sup>2</sup> the interpreter of Austin, called such a use of the word "metaphorical" and refused to sanction it.

Modern sociology is engaged in a study of the law of the family, as developed in the clan and the tribe. Our ecclesiastics in every age have been expert in church law and in canon law. These fields of inquiry have each its own interest. All men, however, living together under one or another form of government are alike concerned with the law that is, civil and criminal, municipal, state, federal, international, comprehended under the general term, jurisprudence.

#### DISTINCTIVE PRINCIPLE IN JURISPRUDENCE

Jurisprudence, like philosophy, is a world in itself. Its literature is of enormous extent and of immense variety. The layman, however learned in other lines of research, stands mute before this venerable science. Fortunately for us in this inquiry, little more is needed than to recognize the relation of law to jurisprudence and their source in moral law. This much, however, is to be said: that not all jurists and jurisconsults recognize the connection of law with morals and that, when it is recognized, there are differing statements of it.

Dean Pound, after a recent survey of the three ways of looking at the relation of law and morals—the analytic, the historical, and the philosophical—concludes:

"In general law cannot depart far from ethical custom nor lag far behind it. For law does not enforce itself. Its

<sup>2</sup>*The Augustinian Theory of Law*, 84.

machinery must be set in motion and kept in motion and guided in its motion by individual human beings; and there must be something more than the abstract content of the legal precept to move these human beings to act and to direct their action."

This, on such authority, is sufficient for the purposes of our inquiry.

### THE POSTULATES OF MORAL LAW

Moral law is found only when and where there is:

First: An *authority* or *right* to command and power to enforce obedience.

Second: *Persons* able to understand and to yield obedience to the authority.

Third: *Commands* or *series of commands*, definite in their requirements and within the ability of the subject.

Fourth: *Sanctions* or *penalties* provided in the event of disobedience.

These postulates in the case of moral law in the universe resolve themselves into:

- I. The authority in the moral order is God.
- II. The subjects of the moral order are created persons.
- III. The commands are given in conscience and in such communications as God chooses to make from time to time.
- IV. The sanctions or penalties are such as will maintain the authority of God, that is, will insure the supremacy of the moral order in the event that the subject of it chooses to disobey the commands.

## DEBATE ON THE MORAL ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE

INTRODUCTION: *The Ages of Debate*

It will at once be recognized that each of these elements of the moral order of the universe has been for ages a center of debate. Parties have been formed, schools have grown up, libraries have been established, as the result. The history of opinion on each head is a study in itself to outline which would occupy all the pages set apart for this inquiry. It will not therefore be thought amiss, if, instead of traversing again the fields familiar to students of philosophy, ethics, jurisprudence, and theology with their great outstanding figures, attention is directed to the conclusions which, to the writer, seem warranted by the evidence and pertinent to this inquiry. This is particularly true if the present inquiry shall lead to a demand for a thoroughgoing consideration of the various profound questions which are involved in the valid conception of the grace of God.

On the other hand, and with all due deference to contrary opinion, it ought to be stated that only as the elements of moral law are recognized will our inquiry yield results of value. To those who deny or even challenge these fundamental principles, these pages can have no serious interest. It is reassuring to know that, whatever the challenge be, there remains the great body of intelligent moral opinion which views these principles as founded on the impregnable rock of human nature as interpreted by the ages of human thought and certified by the infallible Word of God, given in Holy Scripture.

### I. GOD IS THE SOURCE AND THE CENTER OF THE MORAL ORDER, THE SEAT OF ALL AUTHORITY.

The seat of authority has long been sought not only by the religious and by moralists but also by publicists and educators, indeed, by all who have to deal with disorder—civil, social, or academic. With due regard to conflicting theories, it is here held that such authority is to be found only in God, and this because of His own free choice He made us, made us in His image, made us to glorify and to enjoy Him forever; and, having made, sustains us in every moment of our being. His claim upon us thus is absolute; but the relation He sustains to us is none the less personal. That God is divine and that we are human abates nothing of the personal quality of the relation between Him and us. He is not to be confused with a physical or a metaphysical absolute. The discussion of these principles would carry us into theology—the conception of God. Only when this conception, full as it is of awe and praise and wonder, is ours, are we prepared to enter intelligently on this discussion. It must be assumed as present. The questioning of the authority of God, whether defiant or querulous or sincerely inquiring, can only imply the absence of this conviction.

*The Moral Law* is the reflection of God's character and the expression of His will to those who are made in His image. It is the standard He has fixed for us who, made in His image, are able to obey or disobey Him. Honoring His law, we obey Him; neglecting or

disregarding His law, we defy Him. The demands made recently for a religion of personal relations are legitimate, and they are met in the moral law and there only. Illustrations of this authority, at once personal and absolute, abound. One was Pharaoh of Egypt, who, when Moses and Aaron brought him God's command to let His people go, replied: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." Another was Rabshakeh, Sennacherib's messenger to Hezekiah: "Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?"<sup>3</sup> If the consequences for these two men were more immediate than for others, they were not more certain. The authority of God, grounded as it is in His relation to us, will be sustained unless right loses the control of our universe. Bishop Martensen<sup>4</sup> says:

"Is it asked: In what manner shall the origin of authority in human society be explained? We reply: All authority is from God (Rom. 13:1). Though the passage refers most particularly to political authorities, it has an application to the whole of human society. . . . That all authority is from God does not imply that this or that form of State government . . . is from divine right, absolutely, universally binding, but it does imply that this relation of superiority and subordination which permeates the whole of human society, and excludes all abstract liberty and equality . . . in its original source, in its inmost foundation and in its actual essence, is not of man, cannot be deduced from the right of

<sup>3</sup>II Kings 18:35.

<sup>4</sup>*Christian Ethics*, 355.

the stronger or the more able, nor from the common consent, but rests upon God's will and appointment and is subject to His guidance."

*Law Independent of God.* At variance with these teachings, Dr. John M. Young<sup>5</sup> tells us that moral laws are what they are of themselves, of necessity, and do not depend on the highest will. God did not make them, they are eternal as He is; nor can He repeal them, they are immutable as He is and independent of the divine will. He adds, in words which chill the moral sense:

"Defender or avenger they have none, and they need none. Without aid from any quarter they avenge themselves, and exact, and continue without fail to exact so long as the evil remains, the amount of penalty—visible and invisible—to the veriest jot and tittle which the deed of violation deserves. . . . Without inquiry and without effort each case discovers and exposes itself. No judicial verdict is pronounced, and no officer of justice is appointed to carry out the sentence, but at once, punishment or reward, visible or invisible, or both, dispenses itself, and in the amount in which either is merited. Spiritual laws are self-acting; with all their penalties and sanctions they are immediately self-acting, and without the remotest possibility of failure or mistake."

Dr. Horace Bushnell,<sup>6</sup> in like manner, held that there was law before God's will, viz., that necessary, everlasting, ideal law of right, which, simply to think, is to be forever obliged by it. "God's perfections were eternally squared" by this self-existent law, His nature was "cristallizing in eternal obligation, before He became a law-

<sup>5</sup>*The Life and Light of Men*, 79, 88.  
<sup>6</sup>*Vicarious Sacrifice*, 235-243.

giver" and He becomes a lawgiver "only because He was already in the power of law." "God and all moral natures exist, for a time, under this ideal, necessary law." This law is "much loved by all obedient natures, including God."

More recently Dr. Gladden<sup>7</sup> says concerning the duties of a pastor:

"The penalties of the law as well as its precept, he is also to declare. As the law is grounded in the nature of things, its penalties are natural. They are simply the fruit of our own doings,—the effect of causes which we ourselves have set in motion."

According to this teaching, right as embodied in moral law is self-existent and so apart from God, while moral law is self-enforcing with no dependence on the power of God. Its sentences upon men, whether of reward or punishment, dispense themselves and not even God Himself can arrest, abate, or transfer them. This theory, which is supposed to relieve the reputation of God from the suspicion of imposing suffering upon His sinful creatures, robs Him of His righteousness and His sovereignty and closes the door to His love and especially to His grace. Evidently, the usual distinction between the nature of right as grounded in the character of God, and the standard of right as found in the will of God, is not the mind of these writers.

Nothing in determinism is more rigid or more hopeless for sinful men than this view of moral law. It sends us on to seek with the more zeal for the real seat of authority.

<sup>7</sup>*The Christian Pastor and the Working Church*, 110.

*The Authority of God* over His moral creation regulates and defines all other relations He may sustain to them, such as Father, Friend, Ideal, Teacher, Protector, Judge. Each of these contains a truth, but the truth is to be understood in the light of this basic truth. The elaborate substitutes for it which have been devised in our day will not stand a moment's scrutiny either by the eye of God or by the eye of a man who knows what he really is. Dr. Orr<sup>8</sup> has well stated this universal experience:

"If there is Moral Law, grounded, not in the will, but in the nature, of God,—such law as conscience reveals, . . . then the relations of God to men must have in one aspect a 'forensic' character. Our relation to God in conscience, e. g., is 'forensic' and can be nothing else. Fatherhood cannot—though so much higher and more tender—sublate this still more fundamental aspect of God's relation to His world. We call on the Father, who is also the Judge. A universe without law would be chaos. A God for whom Moral Law was not as sacred as it is, or ought to be, to the consciences of His creatures would not be a God we could revere. It is easy to say, 'Love is above Law and can freely remit sin.' But Love is not above Law in the sense that it can set aside Law at pleasure. There are things which even God cannot do, and one is to say that His Holiness shall not react against Sin in condemnation and punishment."

Buddhism, then, which has already been mentioned, while religious to a degree, affords no adequate expression of the moral order. If Buddha did not deny the being of God, he found no use for it in his system. Indeed, as Dr. Bruce has pointedly remarked, Buddhism

<sup>8</sup>*The Progress of Dogma*, 343.

is "the only religion in which the superiority of men over the gods is proclaimed as a fundamental article of faith." The teaching that man suffers in this incarnation for what he did in a previous one inverts the moral order and so defeats justice and deadens hope. Such, as the history of Buddhism shows, has been its practical effect. Moral vigor and the blessings which flow from it are to be found only where there is full recognition of the supreme authority of God Himself.

What is true of Buddhism is equally true of systems of ethics that prevail in Occidental lands. Dr. Martineau<sup>9</sup> holds that in us the sense of authority means the discernment of that which is higher than we are, hovering over and transcending our personalities:

"Another person, greater and higher and of deeper insight . . . one, having moral affinity with us, has yet solemn rights over us. Each of us is permitted to learn, in the penetralia of his own consciousness, that which at once bears him out of himself and raises him to the station of the Father of Spirits; and thence He is enabled to look down over the realm of dependent minds and apply to them the all-comprehending law which He has reached at the Fountain-head."

## II. THE MORAL ORDER HOLDS SWAY OVER THOSE— THOSE ALL AND THOSE ONLY—WHO, AS MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE, ARE PERSONS.

Recognizing that there are created persons other than man, our slight knowledge of them warrants us in limiting our attention to man. Man, man everywhere, man in every age, is under the moral law. Matter is no more

<sup>9</sup>*Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, 105.

truly under physical law than is every free agent under the law of God. One's theory about God or his conception of his own rights, or his sense of moral progress, in no way affects his place under the law. It is well for him if he believes in it, but if he does not, the only difference is in his character and his destiny and not in the measure of his obligation.

As by physical law the order and the beauty and the use of the material world are regulated and insured, so, in the beginning, by the moral law those who think and feel and act for themselves were to be regulated that peace and usefulness might result. Great as the differences between matter and mind are, they afford no ground for holding that there is any difference in the end and aim for which each was placed under its own appropriate law and well started on its way. The physical order remains unbroken; if the moral order has suffered, it must be because of some interruption or irregularity not to be found in the physical and therefore traceable to human personality with its moral freedom and responsibility. Such freedom, let us emphasize, is the prerequisite to entrance upon the moral order. It is not, as some suppose, a concession hastily made to the growing sense of self-importance in the man of today. Rather has it marked moral agency from the beginning. It alone gives quality to what are called moral acts, and, in this sense, the immoral are as significant as the moral. One's place in the moral order hangs primarily upon the choice, his own choice, between good and evil. With no power of choice, he is a stranger, an alien in the

world of morals; with it, he has all the opportunities it affords and also all the risks which it involves.

*The Opportunities of Moral Freedom* are relatively boundless. The crude notion of moral law as a set of restrictions arbitrary and uncomfortable is a perversion of the facts of life. Dr. Amos,<sup>10</sup> speaking primarily for jurisprudence, says that it is in securing to individual men a free field of undisturbed work and life; in other words, in securing personal liberty, that law exhibits its main normal efficacy:

“Men cannot be virtuous unless they are free, and they cannot be free unless they are strongly guarded against the occasional license or permanent selfishness of those who might impair their security. Nor is it only against the violent and the bad that this security for freedom is needed. It is needed likewise against the well-intentioned and conscientious, who have not learned to respect the solitude of the human spirit, nor to refrain from giving rein to their own capricious tempers and passions. Law respects and guards the liberty of all, and, before the law itself is broken, shelters the independence of the vile and worthless with as much jealousy and alacrity as that of the deserving and the rich.”

Well will it be for our day, if these luminous words may aid in ridding us of the prejudice, as cheap as it is mean, that moral law is a hindrance to human effort, that liberty and progress, in some vague way, may thrive in the ruin of it and therefore warrant the effort to destroy it.

*The Risks Involved in Moral Freedom* are none the less real because of the profound mystery as to how one

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<sup>10</sup>*The Science of Law*, 45.

who was endowed with the power of choice could bring himself to exercise that choice upon anything else than the true, the beautiful, and the good as embodied in what he knew of the character of God as expressed in the moral law. Nevertheless, those risks were the conditions of moral freedom.

Dr. Thornwell,<sup>11</sup> from his profound study of the significance of such a choice, finds:

“That man, as a creature, was necessarily mutable, in the sense that he was capable of definite improvement—of passing from one degree of expansion to another—is easily understood; but that a holy being should be capable of a change from the good to the bad—that he should be able to reverse the uprightness of his make, to disorder his whole inward constitution, to derange its proportions and the regulative principles of its actions—is one of the most difficult propositions that we encounter in the sphere of theology.”

If this be discounted as the view of a theologian, which it is, it is enough to say that neither psychology nor ethics as we have them today casts any light on this mystery. With all their discoveries, they stand here baffled. The popular theories of the day are only a clever avoidance of the mystery. The short cut of deterministic psychology, in denying freedom of choice and loading the mystery on heredity, is ruled out. Any clumsy hand can cut a Gordian knot in this fashion, but there is no room here for the clumsy. Dr. McPherson,<sup>12</sup> in his edition of the work of David Dickson, shows that per-

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<sup>11</sup>*Collected Writings*, Vol. I, 239.

<sup>12</sup>*The Sum of Saving Knowledge*, 41.

fect personal obedience could not be rendered apart from temptation.

"If no opportunity were ever given of disobeying the divine will, man's doing of the divine will . . . would not be a moral act or course of conduct. An act is moral only when a man might have done otherwise and yet does what is good. . . . Only two classes of beings are exempt from temptation,—the divine and the irrational. . . . For man, however, the temptation struggle is inevitable if he is to outgrow his original moral childhood."<sup>13</sup>

### III. THE COMMANDS ARE EXPRESSED IN CONSCIENCE AND IN SUCH COMMUNICATIONS OF HIS WILL AS GOD MAY CHOOSE TO MAKE FROM TIME TO TIME.

Such commands, affording the material for individual decision, whether of obedience or disobedience, are comprised in the law. What that law is, how it was first expressed, how it insured blessing to those who kept it, how far it reached, are questions which have engaged the attention of the ablest minds in all ages. The moral order is visible only as these commands stand out clearly to our vision.

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<sup>13</sup>Of Lord Tennyson, his son tells us:

Free will was undoubtedly, he said, the "main miracle, apparently an act of self-limitation by the Infinite, and yet a revelation by Himself of Himself." "Take away the sense of individual responsibility and men sink into pessimism and madness." . . . One of the last passages I heard him recite about free-will was:

But ill for him who, bettering not with Time  
Corrupts the strength of Heaven-descended Will,  
And ever weaker grows through acted crime  
Or seeming-genial venial fault,  
Recurring and suggesting still!

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir by His Son*, Vol. I, 316-318.

Prof. H. R. Mackintosh<sup>14</sup> states this with clearness:

"To be guilty, a man must have moral knowledge or appreciation of right and wrong as they concern his action. Where this precondition is lacking, as in imbecile or infant, guilt cannot be. But the knowledge in question need not be in the present consciousness of the sinner, for we should not cease to call a man guilty whose moral perceptions had been darkened by persistent wrongdoing. Further, guilt presupposes power in the moral agent to have acted otherwise. The sin must have been avoidable."

Prof. A. T. Ormond,<sup>15</sup> writing of man from the primitive times to the present, apart from revelation, distinguishes natural evil, such as pain, suffering, accident, disease, poverty, death, as "a dismal sisterhood" from what he calls "ultra-natural" evil or sin, and finds the sense of it to be "the sense of having disobeyed the law of One who has the moral right to command. Before a God of righteousness whom he had disobeyed, man would feel himself a wicked sinner, worthy of any punishment the offended deity might adjudge to be just.

"The sense of sin is accompanied with the feeling of guilt, and guilt is simply the negative side of responsibility. When I am responsive I am sponsor for the result and must make it good. . . . Ethically, the feeling of guilt involves desert. I not only have not earned good, but I have positively earned that which is evil. . . . Now the evil which guilt merits is retribution. Sin and retribution are, therefore, always close fellows."

The law, the law of God, written on the heart, the conscience, needed at the first no other writing. It was

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<sup>14</sup>*E. R. E.*, Vol. XI, 542.

<sup>15</sup>*Concepts of Philosophy*, 548, 550.

self-expressing; explicit and authoritative—this and not that. Had the primal state continued, nothing else would have been required, and we of today would be living under it elaborated as the condition of life required. The variety, the confusion, the conflict, among the utterances of conscience in man, which began shortly after, show how far away from the primal state man went. Hence arose the need for the republications of the law. How many of these there were, how they were related to one another, we have no means of knowing.

*The Ten Commandments*, given at Sinai, under impressive conditions,<sup>16</sup> embody the nearest approach to the original that we know. They have called into being a literature all their own. Dr. Fairbairn<sup>17</sup> shows that the command given to our first parents as to the range of choice allowed them was in itself “merely outward and positive,” positive as distinguished from moral, and that underneath these and presupposed by them were “certain fundamental elements of moral obligations in the very make and constitution of man,” and that these are the real basis of what “is actually done by him in moral and religious duty.”

It will be enough for us to note that:

Given by God Himself to Moses for Israel, these commands are of authority like unto that of the original. The variation in the forms, one in Exodus and the other in Deuteronomy, does not weaken the authority as a whole.

<sup>16</sup>Note 5. *The Law of God in Its Original Form.*

<sup>17</sup>*The Revelation of Law in Scripture*, 35.

Addressed as they are to Israel, they express what God requires of man in his normal state amid all the variations of race and age and justify the statement of one who knew by experience: "His commandments are not grievous."

Divided as they are into two tables, they serve to show that duty to God and duty to men are alike binding and make one law.

Negative as most of them are in form, they are no more, no less, binding than those others that are positive in form. Both forms delimit sharply the sphere of obedience.

Brief as they are, their application to the life of man as a whole became apparent in the body of civil, criminal, ceremonial, political, and sanitary legislation which was based on them and which was made effective at once.

Partial as was the obedience rendered to them, even by the best, and appalling as was the neglect of them in later days, these commands never lost their authority nor their adaptation to the state of normal man.

Condensed as these ten were by our Lord into two, these two contain all that the ten expressed and are to be interpreted by them.

Ancient as they are, their writ runs everywhere and they hold under their jurisdiction every man, however modern and however defiant, nor can any be released until he has, in himself and otherwise, fully satisfied this law.

*The Mosaic Law* as a whole has no place in this inquiry, being itself one step in that revelation of grace given to God's ancient people, to whom it was "The Law." Only confusion could result from the consideration of its many wholesome provisions at this time. Our only interest in it now is that it contains a restatement of the moral law, as has just been set forth.

It is to be acknowledged that we are here on debatable ground. It is possible only to indicate the issues confronting us and the conclusions had in each of them.

*The Commands Reflect the Character of God.* If moral law has its source in God, it is the expression not only of His supreme authority but also of His character, in forms adapted to the human understanding and within reach of the human will. It is not to be identified with those enactments, special, transient, and technical, which were given to Israel for a definite purpose. It is rather a reflection of all His attributes in the heart and conscience of man. The power which is behind the authority of the law is no more manifest in it than is the wisdom with which it is adapted to the highest development of man according to his natural capacity. The holiness of God marks His law throughout in His plan to make and keep men holy. His justice and truth are manifest in the wonderful balance of the rights and duties of moral agents and the lofty requirements made of them. His goodness, in the form of love, appears in that every requirement is made with the blessedness of the creature in full view as an end second only to the glory of Him who gave the law. To understand His law is

to see more clearly into the character of God, and to find fault with His law is to find fault with Himself. His law, like Himself, is holy and just and good.

*The Commands Hold Primary Place* here because the single purpose of this inquiry concerns that grace which is God's loving response to the needs of sinful man as these needs are expressed in his non-compliance with them. This primary place is not the usual one assigned by theologians and ethical writers. Dr. Strong<sup>18</sup> treats of them in about the same relation as is done here, but Dr. Charles Hodge<sup>19</sup> takes them up only after his full treatment of justification and sanctification. In this, he follows closely the order of the Westminster Standards, which set forth the law after the Christian life for the reason that, as Dr. Morris<sup>20</sup> says, that life "must ever be regulated" by these teachings. This is in line with Calvin,<sup>21</sup> who takes up the law only in his second book as setting forth our knowledge of God in Christ, and this for three uses: to exhibit to us our own unrighteousness, to curb those who have no regard for justice, and to show believers what the will of the Lord is. That is, the law is viewed by these eminent theologians in its relation to the life we ought to live now, rather than in its relation to the life we might have lived had our race continued to obey God. This secondary place is of vital, practical importance, fully consistent with the primary place assigned in this inquiry.

<sup>18</sup>*Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, 533.

<sup>19</sup>*Systematic Theology*, Vol. III, 259.

<sup>20</sup>*Theology of the Westminster Symbols*, 507.

<sup>21</sup>*The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. II, 412.

Other theologians recognize the moral law but pass it over without treatment. Dr. Shedd<sup>22</sup> has no separate place for it at all, although he does call the result of the first test of moral freedom "disobedience to the moral law." Dr. Dorner<sup>23</sup> held that law is "what ought to be," and that it is "concentrated in the Decalogue," but nowhere in his four volumes does he expound it. Dr. Muller<sup>24</sup> taught that the law of Moses is the republication of the moral law necessary as an actual standard of appeal. More recently, Dr. Mullins<sup>25</sup> believes that a moral standard exists in man's moral nature and that the moral law operates in history, but he does not treat of the law or relate the commands to life. These writers, then, do not bring out in full the requirements of God upon men, and, for this reason, the need of grace is not fully set forth in their pages.

*The Commands May Be Lost in Love.* Farther away still is a group of devout men whose theology and ethics center in love because God is love. Dr. Sartorius<sup>26</sup> taught that God "lays down no abstract moral law, nor sets it over man apart from Himself," which is true in the sense explained before, but which tends to weaken the moral law, when he goes on to say:

"The original man was not under the Law, but in it: it encountered him not as a command, an 'ought,' but, being what he ought to be, existence and duty coincided as a straight gauge does with a straight line. . . . Love is itself

<sup>22</sup>*Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. II, 153.

<sup>23</sup>*System of Christian Doctrine*, Vol. III, 403.

<sup>24</sup>*Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Vol. I, 38.

<sup>25</sup>*The Christian Religion in Its Doctrinal Expression*, 177, 269, 289.

<sup>26</sup>*The Doctrine of Divine Love*, 88, 90.

Law; it wills the good as Law does; its will and that of God's law is one will. Love does what is right, not because it ought or must, but because it chooses: its will does not need the incentive of a command, for it is its own incentive."

The question arises, naturally, why if all this be so we should have both law and love, for one is evidently superfluous. If love were itself law, it would embody as the law does, the substance of the commands of God. Dean Mansel<sup>27</sup> points this out as tending to engender the belief that a man is a law unto himself, which can be only on the supposition that he reflects in himself the law of God:

"If he is absolutely a law unto himself, his duty and his pleasure are indistinguishable from each other: for he is subject to no one and accountable to no one. Duty in his case becomes only a higher kind of pleasure—a balance between the present and the future, between the larger and the smaller gratification."<sup>28</sup>

The love of God is to appear in these pages shortly, but there is nothing in it to weaken the authority of God or to provide a substitute for the moral law. So far as the teaching of Dr. Sartorius is true, it may, with due respect, be called a refinement, the practical effect of which is to weaken the claims upon the individual of his commands and to substitute sentiment in the place of obedience.

<sup>27</sup>*The Limits of Religious Thought*, 81.

<sup>28</sup>So Dr. Franz Delitzsch sees in the conscience "the knowledge concerning what God will and will not have manifesting itself progressively, in the form of impulse and judgment and feeling":

Inasmuch, then, as the conscience is witness to the inward Law, there appear in some degree before a man and there arise in him—whether it be that he reflects on his own individual conduct or upon his entire condition—thoughts called forth by the testimony of conscience, on the one side accusing, on the other side excusing.

*A System of Biblical Psychology*, Eng. Tr., 164.

*Law without Promise or Warning.* When we come to Schleiermacher and Ritschl, the atmosphere changes entirely. Grace struggles in vain to break through the clouds of their teachings because the needs of man are either so slight, or, on the other hand, so hopeless of relief. Ritschl's theory of moral law requires to be set forth in detail<sup>29</sup> because of the influence it wields in our day. Briefly, it is that law is civil law and morality is moral law, and that moral law affords no expectation such as follows upon civil law that obedience will be rewarded and there is no immediate relation between moral and legal punishment. How hard this bears on sinful men will appear later. Ritschl leaves religion, at least the Christian religion, out of the sphere of grace altogether.

These groups of writers are cited to illustrate the sense in which the command given in the moral law is held to be primary. As these commands lose their primary place, that need becomes less visible, until, in the denial of their authority, it becomes extinct. Recent treatises on the Christian religion are to be found in one or another of these groups and they may be appraised accordingly.

*The Blessings in the Law.* To safeguard the moral law against the common prejudice that it is negative, repressive, and vindictive, it is noteworthy that these commands were given not only as a test of obedience, but with the purpose of affording blessedness to mankind. Tests, indeed, they were; but they were also op-

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<sup>29</sup>Note 6. Ritschl's *Theory of Moral Law*.

portunities. The law is uniformly represented in Scripture as affording blessedness in obedience, while evil, misery, and disappointment proceed from disobedience. This is clearly brought out upon the republication of the moral law, when Moses assured Israel that the Lord commanded them to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord their God for their good always, that He might preserve them alive, as He had done to that time. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but . . . to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?" There is pathos in the words of God, yearning after His rebellious people: "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" This appears clearly in the Psalms: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night . . . and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." (Psalm 19: 7, 8.) "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. . . . Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then

have perished in mine affliction. . . . O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with me." (Psalm 119:1, 2, 92, 97, 98.)

This conception is found as well in the New Testament, and underlies the words of our Lord, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:30); and those of the apostle John, who, speaking of his Lord, said: "His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3). It is clearly embodied in the words of the apostle Paul: "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 7:12); "The law is good, if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient" (I Tim. 1:8, 9), the last clause having reference rather to the penalty than to the precept.

*Civilization and Obedience to Law.* That this blessedness is not merely promise and that it is by no means restricted to ancient Israel is evident from the testimonies which come from various quarters by men in public life today. To cite but one, the late Hon. Warren G. Harding, President of the United States, in a tour of the country during which he was stricken and died, in one of his several addresses said:

"We Americans undoubtedly hold all records for the making of a multiplicity of laws, state and national. If we were as assiduous about obeying and enforcing obedience to them as we are in demanding and enacting them, there would be no particular occasion for me to address you today on the general subject of law enforcement. We all recognize

that to secure effective administration of the laws, to establish in the public mind an attitude of willing acceptance and obedience to law, is the most impressive mark of a civilized community.”<sup>30</sup>

What was true of Israel has been true ever since, and what makes civilization in America makes it everywhere else. Good citizens obey the laws voluntarily. Law enforcement is needed only among the lawless.

The nations which approximate obedience to the commands of God—and in none of them is there anything more than approximation—stand out as the most highly favored, the pattern and standard toward which backward nations struggle, but struggle, alas! too often, unmindful of the real secret of the pre-eminence of the nations to which they look up. It is no wonder, then, that moral obligation is so binding. The welfare of men from the beginning has been wrapped up in it and this, with the reverence due to God, was enough to warrant the obedience of men made in His image. The real wonder has ever been that men seeking blessedness, peace, and prosperity should be fatuous enough to seek these by relaxing or repudiating the commands of God. With this full in view, we may be able to understand the significance of the words of Archdeacon Farrar,<sup>31</sup> who adapting the language of Bishop Andrews, says, in a tone of kindly severity:

“As regards the manner of our obedience, it may be expressed in three Latin words: it must be as regards ourselves with all our power, *toti*; as regards the Law. It must

<sup>30</sup>Address of the President of the United States on Law Enforcement, at Denver, Monday noon, June 25, 1923.

<sup>31</sup>*The Voice from Sinai*, 80.

be the whole Law, *totum*, a complete obedience; as regards our time it must be a perpetual obedience, *semper*, an obedience all our lives long.”<sup>32</sup>

*The Wholesome Efficacy of the Law Today* is none the less because, in its original function, it is no longer available for man as he is now. The law which once was the way to blessedness now points the way to those who have lost that blessedness. It measures infallibly for the individual who ponders it, his need of grace. The apostle Paul lived for years fully satisfied with himself because a Pharisee of the Pharisees and, as touching the righteousness which was in the Mosaic law, blameless. Afterwards he saw a light and heard a voice and cried out anxiously, his self-contentment all gone. He was alive, or thought he was alive ethically, until God said: “Thou shalt not covet.” Without that law, sin, or rather the sense of sin, was dead in him, but when this divine commandment came, sin revived and he died in the sense that he knew he had broken the law and could no longer live on the basis of obedience to it. For him, the knowledge of sin was by the law, and by his knowledge of sin he was led to see his need of grace and to accept Him who is grace and truth. This is what

<sup>32</sup>“*The Ten Commandments Will Not Budge.*” The authority of the Ten Commandments as expressing universal moral law is recognized widely outside of distinctly religious circles. Authors in defense of their literary rights appeal to it in the following:

“In vain we call old notions fudge,  
And bend our conscience to our dealing:  
The Ten Commandments will not budge,  
And stealing will continue stealing.”

Motto of the American Copyright League,  
Written November 20, 1885.

Literary theft is theft even if it be beyond the reach of the law. Theft is one, but only one, violation of the Ten Commandments, and if these will not “budge” for theft, neither will they budge for any other violation.

older theologians call "the law work": waking the conscience, convicting it, and so pointing the way to One who kept God's law not for Himself but for sinful men. The grace of God, today as then, becomes efficacious only as men measure their need by the high requirements of the law and accept the provision made to meet their need. This, of course, belongs to the great theme of the work of grace in us.

*The Commandments Universal in Their Reach.* The universal range of these commands is, to some minds, obscured by the fact that, as we know them, they come from Sinai, given to Moses for Israel, inherited by Christians from Israel, but, it is claimed, not made known to humanity as a whole. For this reason, humanity is held to be not responsible for obedience except within Israel and among Christian people. That these are under the heavier responsibility is true, but it is also true that humanity as a whole is under the law of God, because that law has been written on the heart of humanity from the beginning. The apostle Paul, devoted as he was to his own race, recognized this: "The Gentiles [nations] which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." (Rom. 2:14, 15.)

Dr. Muller<sup>83</sup> concurs in this:

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<sup>83</sup>*The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Vol. I, 32, 33.

"It is quite out of place—to speak of different moral laws, e. g., one moral law for heathen, another for Jews, and a third for Christians. The only allowable distinction here is that of a more or less perfect exhibition of the one Moral Law; and what is called the Christian Moral Law is only the pure and perfect embodiment of that Law."<sup>34</sup>, <sup>35</sup>

Recent studies in the various religious and ethical systems of the world tend to confirm the statement quoted above. These studies all show traces of the divine commands, traces clear enough to prove that the law is written upon their hearts and dim enough to show also that it is insufficient to meet human needs. That is, man as such, man everywhere, man in all conditions and degrees of development, is under moral law. Any restriction of that law to this or to that section of humanity would be unworthy of God and unfair to those who had been left on the outside.

The bearing of all this upon the question of man's, every man's, standing before God is obvious. It sweeps away at once an array of exceptions and excuses which have seemed to many in Christian lands sufficient to

<sup>34</sup>The Sanday-Headlam Commentary, interpreting the words of the apostle Paul quoted above, represents him as saying:

"I say that Gentiles, too, although they have no written law, will be judged. For whenever any of them instinctively put in practice the precepts of the Law, their own moral sense supplies them with the Law they need. Because their actions give visible proof of commandments written not on stone but on the tables of the heart, these actions themselves bear witness to them; and an approving conscience also bears them witness; while in their dealings with one another their inward thoughts take sometimes the side of the prosecution and sometimes (but more rarely) of the defense."

*International Critical Commentary*, 54.

<sup>35</sup>Principal Denney, interpreting this, says of the Gentiles:

"They have the idea of a task to be done, just as the Jews have; and there is a 'natural legality' (to use an expression of Chalmers) in men which disposes them to aim at achieving righteousness in this way. The first thought of man, Jew or Gentile, is that he will do the things that are required of him,—in other words, keep the Law,—and on the ground of what he thus achieves claim, as of right, the approbation of God."

*H. B. D.*, Vol. III, 78.

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exempt from obligations certain groups of men, such as those born and brought up in vicious surroundings in Christian lands and those who dwell in regions beyond. The evidence shows that these all in some way have the law written on their hearts. That is, there is none beyond the measurings of God's law and so none who, coming short of His measure, are not in need of His grace, and so none to whom His grace, were it known, would not be charming, surprising, mighty, Good News indeed.

It is doubtless of law in this broad sense that Principal Denney<sup>86</sup> interprets the attitude of our Lord to the law as one of entire loyalty to it as the revelation of God's will, entire comprehension of it in its principle and aim, entire subordination of every expression of it to its principle, entire superiority to all human interpretations of it, as designed perhaps for its greater security, but actually making it of no effect; and entire indifference, not indeed to the law as constituting an order for approaching God in worship, but to those elements in the law which, because in themselves without ethical significance, operated to corrupt conscience, and to divide men from one another without moral ground.

We can walk with steadier tread when we feel sure that we view the law of God as did He who came to fulfill it.

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<sup>86</sup>*H. B. D.*, Vol. III, 72.

IV. THE SANCTIONS OR PENALTIES ATTACHED TO THE MORAL LAW ARE SUCH AS WILL INSURE ITS SUPREMACY IN THE EVENT THAT THOSE WHO ARE SUBJECT TO IT DISOBEY ITS COMMANDS.

The supreme issue in the religious world, especially in Christian lands, is at least implied in this statement. If this issue could be expunged or even accommodated, every other element in moral law would be conceded, in form at least, almost unanimously. It is here that we find, massed, a formidable body of scholars of great learning and of much literary skill engaged in the effort to explain religion, especially the Christian religion, without recourse to, even in confident disregard of, the sanctions of the moral law. To prove this fully would carry us over a large area of recent theological literature. It would lead us, particularly, to probe the penetralia of the theories concerning the structure of the Bible, the nature of the work of Christ on the cross, and the basis of Christian ethics, which prevail in certain important sections of modern scholarship.

*Laws without Teeth.* Were this all, men who care nothing for scholarship would pass it by unconcerned. The situation is, however, fully disclosed only when we recognize it in the social order, the family, the state, including business relationships and political relationships, national and international. The very word, anarchy, at which men shudder, is itself a valuation of these sanctions. The red flag is the symbol of the revolt of the discontented against civil law, and it waves only where these sanctions are violated. The general disorder, the

bold-faced crime, the leer-eyed vice of our day, prevail only because these penalties are not imposed, or, if imposed, are readily evaded. The criminal classes, including the real malefactors, whether capital or labor, the actual perpetrators, and their facile attorneys, laugh at the law until they find its penalties fixed and inevitable. Till then, the law "has no teeth," and cannot bite. The only restraint on their evil ways is not the majesty of the law, or the welfare of society, or the protection of the individual. These words to them are only rhetorical flourishes. In their depraved minds, law means only heavy fines, prison walls, or the gallows. Nothing less will reach these moral derelicts, who count themselves clever if they can cheat the law and snap their fingers at the victims of their outrages. Nothing so endangers our social order as immunity in wrongdoing, and nothing warrants immunity so much as laws without teeth. If this seems strong language, jurisconsults, judges, legislators, reputable attorneys, and public-spirited citizens in every civilized land will be the first to condemn it.

*The Testimony of the Ages.* Pagan as well as Jewish and Christian philosophers recognize the connection, fixed and invariable, between the broken law and its penalty. Seneca, the philosopher of the early Roman Empire, sets forth the certainty and the universality of death as the due reward for the violation of the moral law. Archbishop Hooker asks:

"Is it possible that man being not only the noblest creature in the world, but even a very world to himself, his trans-

gressing the Law of his nature should draw no manner of harm after it?"

In like manner Dr. Bruce<sup>87</sup> says:

"Laws for the benefit of Society are meant to be enforced, and necessarily have annexed to them penalties for transgression. . . . This is an ungenial aspect of the power that works for Righteousness. But a legislator who does not care whether his law is obeyed or not, cannot be credited with a passion for righteousness. Severity is an index of moral earnestness. . . . To many not minded to live wisely, the alleged certainty of the Moral Order is not welcome news. They would rather be told that history is a moral chaos, that in this region nothing is certain, that anything may happen to any man at any time, and that every man must take his chance."<sup>88, 89</sup>

This view is not restricted to philosophers and theologians. Men in practical life hold it strongly. Dr. Alfred E. Stearns,<sup>40</sup> after twenty years' experience with boys at Phillips-Andover Academy, says:

<sup>87</sup>The Gifford Lectures: *The Providential Order*, 165, 177.

<sup>88</sup>In our own day, Dr. Ladd fully confirms this view:

"The self contemplates its own deed as already done and affirms that this deed of choice, together with a certain greater or less amount of the consequences following from the deed, belongs to itself; and, in consequence, so does also the blame or praise, the reward or punishment. I did this thing, for it was my choice; and my living, present self doth reasonably assume as its own the moral predicaments of its own choosing. . . . All over the world, when good or bad deeds transpire, search is at once made for the person, or persons, whose the deeds are, so that to them they may be attributed as their very own. And to own the conduct, whether jointly or severally or exclusively, is to establish a sort of right to its appropriate treatment of praise or blame, or reward or punishment."

*Philosophy of Conduct*, 145, 156.

<sup>89</sup>Dr. John R. Mackay says:

"Not only is Sin against God, but it belongs to the perfection of God's nature that no sin should go unpunished. . . . It is quite easy, we admit, to dwell so exclusively on this aspect of the Divine character as to give an entirely wrong impression of the God of Israel. . . . But, notwithstanding, one may justly say that, in a certain sense, it makes the unavoidable wrath of God against sin all the more terrible when it is realized to be the unavoidable wrath of a Being who is naturally infinitely loving in his nature. This view of the matter puts the blame on the right party—it makes sin appear exceedingly horrible."

*Conscience and the Atonement*, P. T. R., Vol. XI, 618.

<sup>40</sup>*The Challenge of Youth*, 118.

"We may call things by all the pleasant or repulsive names we will, but we shall not alter by one jot the established laws of the moral world which govern the development of the human race. Whatever advance mankind has made through the ages has been due to the observance of these unchanging laws. Individuals and nations alike have progressed when they have obeyed them. They have collapsed when they have broken them. The laws are still there whatever we may call them; their effects are inevitable, however we may seek to blink the truth. . . . It is time that we recognized and admitted this truth. To ignore it is to invite ultimate disaster for the individual and the civilization we now enjoy."

The late Prof. Huxley,<sup>41</sup> writing to his friend, the late Rev. Charles Kingsley, in response to the effort of a mutual friend to bring them together on the deeper questions of life, said:

"The more I know intimately of the lives of other men (to say nothing of my own), the more obvious it is to me that the wicked does not flourish nor is the righteous punished.

"The Ledger of the Almighty is strictly kept and every one of us has the balance of his operations paid over to him at the end of every minute of his existence. . . . The absolute justice of the system of things is as clear to me as any scientific fact. The gravitation of sin to sorrow is as certain as that of the earth to the sun, and more so—for experimental proof of the fact is within reach of us all—nay, is before us all in our own lives, if we had but the eyes to see it."

The recognition of praise or blame, reward or punishment, as attending the moral choices of man, is, therefore, fundamental and universal. It cannot be explained away by any of the devices which have been set forth,

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<sup>41</sup>*Life and Letters*, Vol. I, 236.

especially in these latter days. Along with the consciousness of freedom goes the consciousness of responsibility, of liability to loss and degradation as the result of an evil choice. Theories which disregard this are always short-lived, broken to pieces upon the sharp rocks of human consciousness.

*The Testimony of Scripture.* 1. The Curse in Order to the Blessing. Scripture, therefore, does not originate this teaching of penalty but only confirms, clarifies, and intensifies the teaching of conscience. Men who rail at the Scripture for its warning and threatenings are railing really at what is best in human nature. Had Scripture never been written, penalty as the reward of evil doings would have been sure, as the religions of the world testify. Scripture, then, is given primarily, not to warn against the consequences of sin, which are to some degree known to all men, but to offer relief from these consequences through the grace of God. Accordingly, we have the paradox of curses and denunciations given for the purpose not of informing men of something new, but of moving them to flee from the wrath to come; to repent before it is too late; to turn from their evil ways and live. That this is the true view will appear from the fact that nowhere are these warnings so solemn as in God's words to the people He had chosen to receive His peculiar blessings. Strange as it may seem, the curse was in order to the blessing; the threatening was to pave the way for the fulfillment of the promise. Only when the curse and the threatening failed utterly by reason of stubborn self-will, did they cease. "Ephraim is joined

to idols; let him alone," was the message through Hosea. (4:17.) One greater than Hosea said of the Pharisees, "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14.) And the apostle who most fully interpreted the teachings of the Master echoes His words: "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness. . . . For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections. . . . Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." (Rom. 1:24-28.)

It was the same apostle who at Athens addressed the philosophers of the Epicureans and the Stoics and the Athenians generally concerning their idolatry, winding up with the warning they were fully able to appreciate: "God . . . commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." (Acts 17:30, 31.)

This teaching of universal conscience reaches its fullest expression in the words of the same apostle, who warns of the coming of the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the

Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom. 2:6-11.)

2. Divine Retribution. This classical passage embodies the teaching of Scripture, echoing the teaching of conscience. It is in perfect balance, consistent and uniform. Justice and truth require that glory, honor, immortality, peace, be the portion of them that work good; and that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, in like manner be the portion of them that do not obey the truth, of them that do evil. Moral law, in its essential quality, is utterly futile if either of these be denied. Anger, wrath, vengeance, are not, therefore, unworthy of either the moral man or of God. Dr. Nourse<sup>42</sup> well says:

"While in the ancient Semitic religion the anger or wrath of Deity was viewed as inexplicable, arbitrary or capricious, so that it could be appeased by means unrelated to morality or righteousness, in Israel the emphasis was increasingly laid upon the ethical aspect of God's character and, therefore, on the moral character of His wrath as due to His abhorrence of Sin, and it is this view that is set forth almost exclusively in the Bible."

Dr. Orr,<sup>43</sup> combatting the idea of Origen that the anger or wrath of God is to be explained away as an unworthy anthropomorphism, describes it as:

"An energy of the Divine Nature called forth by the presence of daring and presumptuous transgression, and express-

<sup>42</sup>S. B. D., 911.

<sup>43</sup>H. B. D., 197, 198, 199.

ing the reaction of the Divine holiness against it in the punishment or destruction of the transgressor. . . .

"If the objection is urged, as it will be by many, that the attribution of wrath or anger to God . . . is an unworthy mode of conception, and derogates from the divine perfection, it may at least with equal justice be replied that a Ruler of the universe who was incapable of being moved with an intense moral indignation at sin, and of putting forth, when occasion required, a destroying energy against it, would be lacking in an essential element of moral perfection; nor would either the righteousness or the mercy of such a Being have any longer a substantive value."

3. "No Chastisement Follows." Dr. A. B. Davidson<sup>44</sup> is of authority in that group of modern scholars known as the Critical School, with special reference to the origin, the structure, and the authorship of Holy Scripture, based on what are called "the assured results of modern criticism." These conclusions are reached by arguments somewhat remote from ordinary minds, concerned with codes and documents, dates and periods, authors, editors, redactors, etc. Indeed, it is often announced that without careful training in the critical method, men are incompetent to estimate the value of critical conclusions, which is probably true. Dr. Davidson, writing on atonement and forgiveness, states that:

"Wrath in God is what it is in men—an affection, a *pathos*—and is transient. The divine nature is capable of wrath, although God is slow to anger. Then the natural result of wrath is punishment of the wrongdoer. But as wrath is but an affection, and not the fundamental character of the Divine Mind, which rather is long-suffering and compassion, this prevailing disposition may so restrain the anger that no chastisement follows, but there is forgiveness."

<sup>44</sup>*The Theology of the Old Testament*, 318, 332.

Dr. Davidson refers to the passage in which God revealed Himself to Moses as the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and that will by no means clear (the) guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children unto the third and the fourth generation. He, however, omits from his allusion the latter part of this revelation. There is no evidence that the long-suffering of God is any more His "prevailing disposition" than His refusal to clear the guilty and His visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children. The one is as permanent as the other. To unsettle the one by representing it as "transient" is to unsettle the other. The problem of religious thought is so to understand these two that they shall combine in a worthy conception of God.

As to God's retribution, Dr. Orr<sup>45</sup> has shown that the teachings of the Old Testament and those of the New Testament are equally clear. The God of the one will no more clear the guilty than will the God of the other. His mercy and His justice are alike regulative of His dealings with men, and His salvation illustrates gloriously both of these attributes.

*The Moral Order and Biblical Criticism.* What is significant, however, for us at this stage of our inquiry is not the Biblical interpretation of any passage. This may well be left to competent Biblical scholars. The literature on the subject is overwhelming in volume, if not

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<sup>45</sup>H. B. D., Vol. I, 97-99.

in complexity. To enter upon the discussion of it here would only defeat the purpose of this inquiry by leading us off into another. For this reason, up to this point the authority of Scripture has not been invoked except in so far as it bears upon the conclusions reached concerning the moral order in its universal and absolute authority over mankind. When we pass from the moral order, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments will be taken as authority because they are the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

It will not, therefore, lay us open to serious misunderstanding if it be said that, at this point, the conclusions which competent Christian scholars may reach concerning the interpretation of any passage, or series of passages, are not our first concern. Even if it were possible to reconstruct the Bible, as so many are striving to do, and to fix its historical beginning far down in the record as we have it, this would not relieve the situation. When Dr. Davidson teaches that, under his theory, the attitude of God towards sin may be such that no punishment, or, as he puts it, "no chastisement follows," he is venturing beyond the limits of Biblical study into the wider field of moral order. How far his critical acumen will carry him in this direction, his pupils may be able to say, but this much is true: when he has disposed of the teaching of the Bible, to his own satisfaction, he has still to meet the teaching of the moral order written on the hearts of men. This is something more than documents, dates, and redactors, and requires an apparatus quite other than that which is claimed for

the critical school. If our views of the Bible were to become revolutionized, critical scholars, as well as the rest of men, would have to meet the requirements of the moral order. Our theories may fly far and fast, but when they strike against this, they fall broken by the force of the impact. It is only fair to believe that men of the high character of Dr. Davidson would deeply regret if, in any disaster which overtook their theory, the souls of any sinful men were wrecked because they had lived under the agreeable delusion that "no chastisement follows."

The teachings of Prof. Ritschl, referred to before, bear directly on this point.<sup>46</sup>

*Law and Judgment.*<sup>47</sup> Moral law, therefore, involves a judgment by which the status of its subjects is judicially ascertained. Every one of them either has or has not kept the commands, and it is upon his conduct in this particular that a decision is to be reached. God will render to every man according to his deeds. Christian men have no advantage in this over others, as the apostle Peter plainly warned them: "If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." Judgment, in this sense, is the determination of our standing before moral law, the proof that God is righteous and true, the demonstration to men that moral freedom carries with it, to the very end, moral responsibility. In the case of men who have

<sup>46</sup>Note 6. Ritschl's Theory of Moral Law and His Conclusions.

<sup>47</sup>Note 7. Some Recent Valuations of the Law of God.

broken the law, judgment fixes penalties, and penalty becomes certain and irreversible.

This bears not only on those who disregard the law, but as well upon those who recognize and tremble before it and find deliverance in Christ. This deliverance is, at times, represented as deliverance from judgment, as if, in Christ, some exemption had been obtained or else some special occasion had been arranged for their private benefit. This is not only utterly baseless, but is unworthy of Him who, in infinite grace, prepares men to face the most rigid scrutiny so that in Him they can give triumphant answer for all their misdeeds to their eternal salvation and to His eternal glory.

It ought not to be difficult, then, to estimate the real value of those forms of current opinion which represent the forebodings of conscience as due to a lower stage of moral development, when fear had its place, or to a system of theology which our age is supposed to have outgrown. These opinions have been passed so freely among men that many have come to accept them as beyond dispute, and to look with amazement on those who teach otherwise. Such persons may well restrain their amazement, for as long as men are under moral law, judgment, retribution, punishment, will stare the evildoer in the face. If this were not so, the righteous must needs suffer always, as they do now, for the disturbances of the moral order perpetrated by the unrighteous, while the unrighteous goes free, laughing his way through eternity.

The true friend of men, then, is he who prepares them in advance for the Judgment and finds, if possible, a way in which God can be just and yet justify the ungodly, in which, by satisfaction of the law, the unrighteous may inherit the blessings of the righteous. If there be such a way, it is not by moral law, which with all the blessings it offers to those who keep it perfectly, has no hint of such an outcome. For the present it is enough to see clearly the fundamental certainty, written on the conscience of man, that there is no escape from the moral law.

*The Historic Recognition of Moral Law.* These four elements of moral law need all the emphasis we can give them in our day. The delusions which mislead even Christian men spring, for the most part, from the ignoring or denial of one or more of these elements. These, although frequently exposed, die hard because they pander to the baser elements of human nature and stir the anarchism which lies latent in every breast. Man needs to be at his best to escape them. His ear must be deaf to siren voices, even those which speak in pious phrases and claim high ecclesiastical authority. It is for this reason that the great historic interpretations of the Christian faith set forth so clearly these elements of moral law. Dr. Morris<sup>48</sup> has well said that the Westminster definition was the clearest and the most concise, the broadest and most impressive, in all Christian symbolics: The moral law is:

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<sup>48</sup>*The Theology of the Westminster Symbols*, 516.

"The declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding every one to personal, perfect and perpetual conformity and obedience thereto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man,—promising life upon the fulfilling and threatening death upon the breach of it."

What has already been set forth is perhaps sufficient to indicate the grounds on which this symbolic utterance rests; what follows immediately may serve further to illustrate it; and, to the end, this inquiry will seek to have it ever in view.

*The Moral Law in Operation.* Any law is, of course, seen at its best when at work, for not till then do its advantages and its defects appear. Genesis 1-3 affords us the first instance on record of the moral law at work. And, in order that this may appear in its adaptation to present-day conditions, the summary is taken from one of the most recent translations of the Old Testament (Moffatt's):

"So God formed man in his own likeness, in the likeness of God he formed him, male and female he formed both. And God blessed them; God said to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it.' . . . Then God the Eternal moulded man from the dust of the ground, breathing into his nostrils the breath of life; this was how man became a living being.

"In the land of Eden, to the far east, God the Eternal then planted a park, where he put the man whom he had moulded. And from the ground God the Eternal made all sorts of trees to grow that were delightful to see and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree that yields knowledge of good and evil in the centre of the park. . . . God the Eternal took man and put him in the park of Eden, to till

it and to guard it. And God the Eternal laid a command upon the man: 'You are free to eat from any tree in the park,' he said, 'but you must not eat from the tree that yields knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from that tree you shall die.' . . . And he ate. . . .

"To the man he [God the Eternal] said, 'Since you have listened to what your wife said, and have eaten from the tree of which I forbade you to eat, cursed is the ground on your account, you shall suffer all your life, as you win food from it; thorns and thistles shall it bear for you, and you must eat plants of the field; in the sweat of your brow you shall earn your food, till you return to the ground from which you were taken.' . . .

"So God the Eternal expelled him from the park of Eden, to till the ground from which he had been taken; he drove the man out, and set kherubs at the east of the park of Eden, with the blade of a sword flashing in every direction, to guard the path to the tree of life."

The marked changes in the rendering will be noted. What is more significant is that the change of rendering, made in the light of the latest discoveries, effects no loss of meaning in the words. The lesson as to man's primal state and his loss of it is as impressive as ever.

*The Primeval Narrative* is, of course, open to the various theories of myth and legend now so popular. For those who would reduce moral agency to a naturalistic basis and eliminate man's primal liberty, responsibility, and recompense, some such theory is imperatively necessary. It demands, naturally, that the content of the record as summarized above be reduced to a minimum, and this many are striving to do now. It cannot, however, be questioned that, if this narrative were myth,

no myth was ever more admirably designed to illustrate the operation of moral law.

If, on the other hand, we strive to see not how little but how much we may gather from the narrative, we find it true to life, fulfilling all the conditions of the moral order and thus, antecedently, likely to be history rather than myth. It is indeed wrapped in figures and in symbols and it has always been exposed to fanciful interpretations, but the figures illustrate the facts and in the symbols we may discover the outline at least of God's dealings with man as he began to be.

*The Four Elements in Moral Agency* are all here: God, making man in His image, investing him with authority and holding him subject to authority, dealing with him as person with person, friend with friend; man, having the power of choice, intelligent and moral, and afforded opportunity promptly to exercise it; the issues of choice plainly before him with power to eat of the forbidden fruit and with power not to eat. Whatever else may be doubtful in the narrative, man's power of choice is clear—a magnificent opportunity to show the power of will in resisting temptation, especially as every impulse of the moral nature and every inducement to more than physical good was offered.

Further, the test was the more real because the warning was unmistakable: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Death, in this sense, was not the end of existence, as became evident very soon. Existence continued, but under conditions onerous, degrading, and sorrowful. Innocence gone, a guilty knowl-

edge of the evil, a dread of God, shame in the presence of one another, expulsion from the abundance and the attractions of their primal state, an existence spent in hard labor amid increasing difficulties, all these were in the warning which accompanied that first specific command. As in the case of obedience, the blessing which was the reward was certain, so in this case was the curse, as the recompense of an evil choice. When were good and evil ever set so plainly before men? When was a free choice ever weighted so heavily with consequences?

## V. THE LIMITATIONS OF MORAL LAW

These limitations, if such there be, will appear when we consider the moral order as a whole. In the briefest form, it is: God; Over man; By commands; With the alternative of penalty. Dr. Thornwell<sup>49</sup> has pointed this out very clearly:

“Perfect obedience is that alone which is obedience at all, and the very moment the perfection is lost everything entitled to reward is lost. All merit vanishes forever. The reward which moral government postulates is the continuance of the divine favour through the period of obedience—nothing more, nothing less. . . . The very language of the Law as written upon the heart is, Do and live, for while you do you shall live.”

This sets forth what the law can do for us.

It makes just as clear what the law cannot do. The divine favor is continued through the period of obedience, but how long this period is, first for the individual

<sup>49</sup>Collected Writings, Vol. I, 256.

and then for the race, the moral law does not tell. This fact, which probably is beyond dispute, brings out clearly the limitations of the moral order, and it is no depreciation of that order to recognize them and to decide what is to be done when we experience them. These limitations are two:

*Individual Instability.* Under moral law, as it began to be, each individual continues in the enjoyment of the good so long as he obeys personally the commands of God, and no longer. It depends upon his decisions or choices, one after another, and because these are liable to change at any moment, his position is unstable or mutable. He might live for years, even for ages, keeping the law and then, by some choice, at once strange and sudden, disobey, come at once under penalty, and thus lose all. The apostle James put this clearly: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." He merely restates the original law: Do and live, and as long as you do, you shall live. The man who fails once is as truly, if not as deeply, guilty as he who breaks the whole law. Here is liberty, to obey or disobey; liberty, not license, as if the choice once made brought no consequences; liberty, rather, with liability to painful consequences if the choice were to be evil. Moral liberty is, indeed, a privilege, a distinguishing mark of mankind; but one may never forget that it carries within itself perpetual uncertainty. One who has just realized it will revel in it for a time, but, as the sense of uncertainty grows upon him, liberty becomes not a boon but a burden. Strange as it may seem, in

view of the popular literature concerning liberty, man, deep down within, craves a liberty which, while unimpaired, carries with it a certainty as to his choices for the future, and so for his future welfare. However startling this may appear to those who chronically protest against authority and control, it reaches farther down to the depth of human needs than anything which this literature affords. Such a certainty, coupled with liberty, the moral law cannot afford, for it operates choice upon choice, act upon act.

*Racial Instability.* The race of man, as well as the individual, suffers from the limitations of the moral law, for the reason that it affords no method of dealing with man as a whole, recognizes only the individual, and knows nothing of solidarity. If primal man had chosen wisely, the good resulting from the choice would have been stopped with him. No son of his could inherit it, no grandson. Each of them must begin where he began and live under the same inexorable rule: Do and live, and as long as you do, you shall live. The millions of men who people the earth would, under these limitations, be only so many grains of sand, unrelated, disconnected, each one liable, at any moment, to the act of disobedience, with the penalty following inevitably. Some, perhaps, would continue to obey, others would plunge deeper and deeper into the consequences of their evil choices; but everywhere would be uncertainty and instability. No program for the future, either of the race or of any section of it, would be possible.

*What the Law Could Not Do.* Limitations like these show the insufficiency of moral law in itself to meet the needs even of men who could keep it inviolate. Fair and just as it was, it was not enough even though it be God's own law. These limitations have been recognized in successive eras of religious thought and have left an impression that is profound. They explain why to many the moral law seems stern, relentless, and unavailing, for these have their eyes holden so that they see nothing beyond the law. Even those who see beyond and recognize love standing apart from the law cannot make out how these two might both be concerned with primal man. To say the truth, they are scarcely blameworthy for this, because many of our writers of high authority have written fully about law but have not recognized in man's primal state the presence of God's love. That they see her later on, in the form of grace, does not relieve them of the charge of blindness in failing to recognize her here.

However this may be, whatever ideas of law may prevail, men, consciously or unconsciously, crave what, in very untheological language, may be called the stabilizing of the individual and the stabilizing of the race. Neither is possible under moral law.

## VI. THE CONFIRMATION OF MORAL LAW IN SCRIPTURE

Holy Scripture enters into our inquiry at this stage because we are about to pass from God's law to His love. In approaching it, we will be hindered and baffled if we permit ourselves to become involved in questions

of documents, dates, and authors. These, while important in their proper place, may not engross the attention of Christian thinkers.

It will have been noted that the citations of Holy Scripture already made have been carefully restricted to but one of its functions. This function is to confirm, to correct, and to apply to our case God's law and to note its limitations so far as they are known to men prior to and apart from revelation. Its other function of revealing God's love has, for the time being, been passed over. The two functions are complementary. To neglect either one is to introduce confusion and so to hinder, if not to halt, our inquiry. If God's law be left to the varying and conflicting interpretations of men, its authority will inevitably be weakened. On the other hand, if God's love be left to the speculative and sentimental fancies of men, it will turn out to be impotent in the emergencies of life. Law and love, each with its own aim, unite in demanding full recognition of the Word of God as given in Holy Scripture, and the various theories of Biblical students are subject to these requirements.

In this inquiry, limited as it is to our need of grace, there is room only for the teachings of Holy Scripture as to God's love, so far as this was manifested in the primal state of man. What that love means to sinful man as it becomes grace lies beyond the present purpose, eager as one may well be to declare it.

When, however, we seek to confirm, to correct, and to apply what we have gathered from con-

sciousness and reflection, as shown in science, logic, philosophy, and the ultimate realities, we find a wealth of material. It does not lessen the value of this material to recognize that it deals with what is known as natural religion, for, despite frequent denials, natural religion has its place in the Christian faith. Holy Scripture, therefore, is of importance to us as really, if not as conspicuously, as in the revelation of those truths which we need and which we cannot discover for ourselves. Indeed, our estimate of that which is revealed is of value only as it proceeds upon our estimate of that which is known prior to and apart from revelation. This is evidenced by the religious appeal to men in this situation as in such volumes as *Sermons to the Natural Man*, by the late Dr. W. G. T. Shedd.

What this is, is familiar to every student of Holy Scripture and needs only to be referred to. It bears upon nature and human nature alike. As to nature, we learn that

*"The Heavens Declare the Glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."* (Psa. 19:1, A.) That this is violently disputed today abates not its force for those who interpret God by His works. What is true of the heavens, is no less true of the human frame: "Consider, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that chastiseth the nations, shall not he correct?" (Psa. 94:8-10, R.) If our age has outgrown the Bridge-water treatises and the reasonings of Dr. Paley, it re-

quires that, all the more carefully, we interpret these teachings of Holy Scripture. A higher application of this appears in the answer given to the men of Lystra, after the apostle Paul had made a man, lame from his birth, to stand up and walk. They were so impressed that they said: "The gods have come down to us in human form!" When Paul and Barnabas heard this, "they rent their clothes and sprang out among the crowd, shouting, 'Men, what is this you are doing? We are but human, with natures like your own! The gospel we are preaching to you is to turn from such futile ways to the living God who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is.'" (Acts 14:11-15, M.) In bygone ages, He allowed all nations to go their own ways, though, as the Bountiful Giver.

*"He Did Not Leave Himself without a Witness,* giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, giving you food and joy to your heart's content." (Acts 14:17, M.) The words checked the movement to deify the apostles, evidently because the men of Lystra recognized the truth of them. That is, in the midst of their worship of Zeus and Hermes, they had God's witness within them and they knew that He alone was worthy of their worship.

In like manner, when the apostle Paul was at Athens "his soul was irritated at the sight of the idols that filled the city." He encountered Epicureans and Stoics, who asked him, "May we know what is this novel teaching of yours?" to whom he replied: "Men of Athens, I observe at every turn that you are a most religious peo-

ple. Why, as I passed along and scanned your objects of worship, I actually came upon an altar with the inscription 'To an Unknown God.' Well, I proclaim to you what you worship in your ignorance. The God who made the world and all things in it, he, as Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in shrines that are made by human hands; he is not served by human hands as if he needed anything, for it is

*"He Who Gives Life and Breath and all things to all men. . . . He has fixed a day on which he will judge the world justly by a man whom he has destined for this. And he has given proof of this to all by raising him from the dead."* (Acts 17:16-31, M.)

The significance of this lies in the fact that not until the Resurrection was mentioned was there any dissent from the statements of the Apostles. God, the Lord of heaven and earth, too great to be served by human hands, creating all nations from a common origin, close to each one of us, has fixed a day in which He will judge men. These truths, the Athenians, even the Epicureans and the Stoic philosophers, knew already and, by their silence, acknowledged. Scripture, in this instance, merely confirmed and emphasized what men without Scripture already knew.

The capital illustration of this function of Scripture is, however, to be found in the Epistle to the Romans. Of it, the apostle Paul devoted three out of sixteen chapters to this use. He sets forth the moral state of the Gentile or heathen or pagan world and compares its condition with that of the Jew.

The Gentiles—mankind as a whole outside the chosen people—“who have no Law obey by natural instinct the commands of the Law,” and thus

*“Without Having a Law, Are a Law to Themselves;* since they exhibit proof that a knowledge of the conduct which the Law requires is engraven on their hearts, while their consciences also bear witness to the Law, and their thoughts, as if in mutual discussion, accuse them or perhaps maintain their innocence.” (Rom. 2:14, 15, W.)

This double use of the word law occasions no difficulty to those who recognize moral law as it has been set forth in these pages. It is the law “engraven on their hearts,” republished in the Ten Commandments for the benefit of those to whom God’s revelation of grace was given, and quite distinct from the Mosaic law, which included those sanitary, political, typical, and ritual ordinances given to Israel as God’s peculiar people. These were to be done away with as types and shadows when He should come who was to fulfill the law.

*Without Excuse.* The effect of this course in the Epistle to the Romans was to show beyond question that mankind is without excuse in its sins, because “What may be known about Him is plain to their inmost consciousness; for He Himself has made it plain to them. For, from the very creation of the world, His invisible perfections—namely His eternal power and divine nature—have been rendered intelligible and clearly visible by His works, so that these men are without excuse. For when they had come to know God, they did not

give Him glory as God nor render Him thanks, but they became absorbed in useless discussions, and their senseless minds were darkened. While boasting of their wisdom they became utter fools, and, instead of worshipping the imperishable God, they worshipped images resembling perishable man or resembling birds or beasts or reptiles. For this reason, in accordance with their own depraved cravings, God gave them up to uncleanness, allowing them to dishonour their bodies among themselves with impurity. For they had bartered

*"The Reality of God* for what is unreal, and had offered divine honours and religious service to created things, rather than to the Creator—He who is for ever blessed, Amen. This then is the reason why God gave them up to vile passions. . . . And just as they had refused to continue to have a full knowledge of God, so it was to utterly worthless minds that God gave them up, for them to do things which should not be done. Their hearts overflowed with all sorts of dishonesty, mischief, greed, malice. They were full of envy and murder, and were quarrelsome, crafty, and spiteful. They were secret backbiters, open slanderers; hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful; inventors of new forms of sin, disobedient to parents,

*"Destitute of Common Sense*, faithless to their promises, without natural affection, without human pity. In short, though knowing full well the sentences which God pronounces against actions such as theirs, as things which deserve death, they not only practice them, but

even encourage and applaud others who do them." (Rom. 1:19-26, 28-32, W.)

This pronouncement, unparalleled in religious literature, challenges our closest scrutiny. It corrects current opinion concerning human nature and also concerning the Holy Scripture.

*Universal Truths.* It shows clearly that these statements are no part of the peculiar revelation which Scripture conveys to sinful man. Careless readers draw back from them and count them harsh and depressing, and because of them find fault with the Scriptures, particularly with the apostle Paul. The fact, however, is that these solemn words merely restate what is given in the "inmost consciousness" of mankind and that, when the wrath of God against sin is "revealed," it is revealed to men everywhere and not merely to those who read the Scripture. Had the Scripture been left unwritten, had God spoken neither by prophet, apostle, nor by His Son, He would not have left Himself "without a witness," the witness within the human breast. Men would have known, just as men beyond the range of Scripture now know, that God is angry against sin and that "to each man He will make an award according to his actions; to those on the one hand who, by lives of persistent rightdoing, are striving for glory, honour and immortality, the Life of the Ages; while on the other hand upon the self-willed who disobey the truth and obey unrighteousness will fall anger and fury, affliction and awful distress, coming upon the soul of every man and woman who deliberately does wrong—upon the Jew

first, and then upon the Gentile; whereas glory, honour and peace will be given to every one who does what is good and right—to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. For God pays no attention to this world's distinctions." (Rom. 2:6-11, W.)

Holy Scripture, then, has a place for that which is or may be known by all men. That is, the moral law, in the four elements already named, is recognized and emphasized in this great passage. There is no finer illustration in all Scripture of this one of its functions.

## CHAPTER III

### Sin and Our Need of Grace

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#### I. BEFORE SIN CAME

LOVE IS THE message brought by Holy Scripture, of that which man needs and which law, even moral law, cannot do for him. It is the love of God, for "God is love," according to the apostle John. (I John 4:8-16.) This word, spoken long after the primal state of man, reaches far back to the beginning, unless God merely became Love at some definite period of time, when man's case had grown desperate. According to the fine distinctions of the Apostolic writers, as recognized by recent lexicographers, Grimm-Thayer<sup>1</sup> and Cremer,<sup>2</sup> love<sup>3</sup> is from person to person, as from the holy God to holy creatures made in His image, whether these are angels or men. Love takes the special form of grace when it goes out from a holy God to sinful men. While the generic term love is used throughout the New Testament, the specific form, grace, displays the more gloriously the condescension, the generosity, and the unexpectedness of the love of God. To merge grace in love is to obscure its transcendent meaning; to date love, the

<sup>1</sup>A Greek-English *Lexicon of the New Testament*, being Grimm's Wilkes Clavis *Lexicon of the New Testament*, translated, etc., by Prof. Joseph H. Thayer, 665.

<sup>2</sup>*Biblico-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament Greek*, by Hermann Cremer, D.D., 573.

<sup>3</sup>Note 8. *Love and Grace*.

love of God, only from the time it became grace, is to deny it to those who, made in God's image, had never sinned. Love, then, not grace, claims our attention now.

*Our Theologians* interpret this word of the apostle John in harmony with his earlier word in the same epistle, "God is light" (I John 1:5), and also in harmony with "our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). They tell us that love is an attribute of God and that, with His justice, His power, His wisdom, and His faithfulness, it makes up His character, glorious in its perfection and exhaustless in its blessings upon all creatures who are made in His image. Our theologians, however, do not all observe the distinction pointed out by our lexicographers, and some of them even speak of grace as present at creation, and so obscure the beauty of grace for sinful men. Neither do they find work for love to do between the time when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26, R) and that awful moment when "He drove out the man" (Gen. 3:24, R) following him with the pregnant word to the serpent, "He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15, R).

Does this love, God's love, stand idle in between creation and human sin? Had it no outflow until man had forever lost his primal state and love must take the form of grace? Unless love stood thus idle, there is every reason why we should seek her before she became grace. If this is judged venturesome, it is the venture after love and, for that reason, worth while. Those who rejoice in grace will not begrudge the love of God to those who

have never sinned or to man before his sin. Those who recoil from the severe conditions of the law will look with friendly eye on an effort like this. Those who count this effort unsuccessful will be expected, without delay, to explain what the love of God was doing for man after he was made and before he had sinned, and what it would be doing now if he had never sinned.

*Love and Law* are not contraries. If they were, love should have had mention in these pages much earlier than at this stage. They are complementaries, not contraries, and so we have been able to wait to see what the law could do for us and also what it could not, before we asked of love what she could do, when law had done its all. The apostle Paul and the apostle John knew well both law and love, and they blend the two in exquisite harmony. Their readers, however, do not always follow them but, too often, divide into legalists who know nothing but law and mystics who see nothing but love.

The practical man of our day is concerned but slightly with either legalism or mysticism. Aware, more or less, of the just demands of God in His moral law, anticipating, mildly or seriously, the righteous sentence of the law upon him because of his many lapses, he looks beyond for something more. How much more there is, he does not know. How easy it is to be mistaken, he has learned by sad experience. What it is that is beyond, he can hardly describe, but he thinks it must be love, for he has learned that God is love. If it be love, he is sure the Infinite Lover will reveal it in His own infinite way, and

that it will be a love which, while it satisfies the heart, will not offend the head. This practical man, then, will not listen to the critic who piles up obstacles in the way of such a revelation;—so much the worse for the critic, he says, for my heart feeds neither on negatives nor on conjectures. Neither will he spend much time on a theology that blurs the clear outlines of law in a soft maze of love;—so much the worse for theology, he says, for my head feeds on substance, not on sentiment. Urged on by the promptings of conscience, which speaks for the law, fully aware of the barriers beyond which law cannot go, holding himself ready for surprises, humbling but delightful and invigorating, he looks for the signs of love, the love of God. Surprising as love is, devout men have found it at work here in the primal state of man.

Dr. Shedd,<sup>4</sup> setting this forth, said:

“God did not place Adam in a state of probation from mere curiosity to see if he would fall; or from malevolence to cause him to fall; but from the benevolent desire that Adam, in the exercise of the ample power with which he was endowed, might merit and obtain, as the recompense of his fidelity, a final and everlasting deliverance from the possibility of sinning.”<sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup>*Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. II, 151.

<sup>5</sup>Stephen Charnock, writing on the Being and Attributes of God (1682), said: “Every creature of God is good; every creature has some communication from Him; which cannot be without some affection to them, every creature hath a footstep of the divine goodness upon it. God, therefore, loves that goodness in the creature else He would not love Himself. . . . This is the most pleasant perfection of the divine Nature; His creating power amazes us. His conducting wisdom astonishes us, His goodness as furnishing us with all conveniences delights us, and renders both His amazing power and astonishing wisdom delightful to us. God hates no creature, no, not the devils, and damned as creatures, He is not an enemy to them as they are the works of His hands; He is not properly an enemy that simply and absolutely wishes evil to another. But God does not absolutely wish evil to the damned; that justice that inflicts upon them the deserved punishment of their sins is part of His goodness.”

*Works*, Vol. III, 317.

<sup>6</sup>And Dr. Thornwell said:

“Our moral nature is adjusted to a scheme of pure justice, and whenever

*The Task of Love* was such as no other would undertake, and it was set out very definitely. It was to deliver primal man from the uncertainty involved in his own choice, and, through him, to secure to the race after him relief from uncertainty. The law deals with the individual, act by act. Could love assure him concerning his future acts? The law deals with the individual only and not with the race. Could love stretch the choice of the individual to cover the race?

It is scarcely possible for us of today to picture to ourselves what human life would have been had these conditions been fulfilled. Civilization and morality must unite with religion in the painting of the picture, and at the best it would be an outline only faint at that. Enough that it would reveal a life in which there was, of course, no weariness, no misspent effort, no intolerable burdens, no disappointed expectations. Beyond these it would reveal also a life in which there were no regrets, no complaints, no self-corrections, no repentances, no reforms, no redemptions, no place for the wondrous words of John three-sixteen, because the world would then have been forever safe from all danger of perishing. The glimpse is, indeed, far away, but it is worth while.

*Love Found the Way.* To accomplish her task, love knew full well she could not cheat the law, for love and law are one in God. Instead, she must satisfy the law

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God's love prompts Him to outrun its demands, our expectations must be determined by special revelations of His purposes and plans. His free acts cannot be anticipated by any measure of reason or conscience. If known at all, they have to be made known by Himself. To deny, therefore, that our Religion must be revealed is to say that God can never do more than our merits can exact; it is to limit and contract His goodness."

*Collected Writings, Vol. I, 268.*

and then go beyond it. She must find the way by which the obedience of a man to the commands of God, as required by law, could be made permanent and so the man be, at the same time, both free and certain of himself. She must find the way by which the obedience of one man to the commands of God, which law requires of every man, could stand for the obedience of others and so these others, as well as himself, be free, and at the same time certain. The questions involved were beyond law, even beyond equity, but love is ever daring and asks:

Would the Lawgiver consent to make one supreme test and by it permit man to assure himself concerning his future courses?

Would the Lawgiver be willing to reckon or count the good which one man did to the benefit or to the credit of the race at large?

Was there in those primal days one who was willing to act for others, provided it involved him in no pain or loss?

Has there been since those primal days One, Himself holy, who was willing to suffer pain, and shame, and death in the place of those who have broken God's law?

*The Imputability of Deeds.* These questions carry us into the mysteries of imputation, by which, under legal safeguards, one act of a man is taken as decisive and, under like safeguards, one man becomes responsible for the deeds or misdeeds of another. In everyday life, we know that one man is surety, security, endorser, for another. If it were not so, our financial transactions would

lose much of their present character; but the present case is not financial. We know that, ethically, every man is liable for his own deeds, and, for this reason, some have scouted the task of love, but love looks beyond the ethical even while she promotes it.

Dr. Ladd<sup>7</sup> describes "the consciousness of imputability" by which "someone" is approved when conduct is good and "someone" is disapproved if the conduct is evil. Each of us knows that he is approved or has credit when he does good and that he is disapproved or has blame when he does evil. He knows that beyond the credit lie the blessings which come as a reward, and beyond the blame lie the pain and the shame which come as a penalty. Is there any way by which one can deserve the credit and others receive the blessings? Is there any way by which one or many may deserve the blame while the suffering following upon the blame is borne by another? It would be a case of transfer, the transfer of blessing to those who had not earned it, the transfer of suffering to one who, innocent himself, bore it for others who deserved it.

This was the undertaking of love. She could effect just such a transfer. Love found the way and, as she found it, she laughed at the locksmith who would use the law to shut her out.

*The Revelation of Love.* Such a prospect is mere speculation or an idle dream unless the Infinite Lover Himself gave it reality by an announcement, a message, which, coming from God's commands, constitutes a reve-

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<sup>7</sup>*Philosophy of Conduct*, 156.

lation. The law, written upon the heart and the conscience, could only point steadfastly the way of duty and of individual obedience. If this suffice for any man, he needs nothing more. Failing as it does to suffice for us men and only deepening the mystery of evil in the world, it opens the way for revelation, a primal revelation, a revelation given long before Moses or the earliest records of religion. It opens the way for a revelation given along with the blessings of the primal state so that besides the food to satisfy and the early fellowship of man and woman, there was the voice of God, speaking of law, indeed, but also of love that was beyond law, pointing the way by which primal man for himself and for the race might have freedom and, with freedom, certainty, the certainty of right choices and of the blessings which attend them.

Still this movement of love is denied by many, and the denial is based on the fact that we have, in documentary form, no record of this primal revelation of love, with its terms and its provisos, and so we encounter

*The Triple Alliance of Literalists.* From three directions comes an attack on our revelation of love, aiming to show that it is a dream, a speculation, or a delusion. The attack is formidable, its leaders courageous, and their assault vigorous.

1. The Legal Literalist lays down precisely the terms of a covenant or of a contract as provided by statute between man and man and triumphantly points out that these terms are not met in our conception of the revelation of love, that there is no evidence of voluntary ac-

tion on the part of the primal man by which he assumed responsibility for the race, and that without this such a contract would be null and void. We can only agree that the statute has been correctly interpreted and can say in reply that if the word "transaction" or "arrangement" appears to be less legally technical, we cannot object to the change of term. Dr. Kuyper,<sup>8</sup> who, as Prime Minister of Holland as well as theologian, was well versed in legal requirements, says:

"When two parties get together, enter into negotiations and there make an agreement or covenant, such a covenant is entered into mechanically. This, however, was not the case in paradise. Seeing God had made man in His own image and for Himself, man belonged to God. The two parties, hence, did not come together, they already were together, and the covenant is effected organically, i. e., of its own accord, as the natural expression of the reciprocal position of the parties involved."

2. The Ethical Literalist points out that each man is responsible to God for each act of his life and each man for himself, that ethics is a system based on these principles and recognizes nothing beyond them. It is monstrous, he says, to load one man with the faults of another and to let the wrongdoer go free. This would be to put a premium on crime and to punish the innocent for the guilty. We can only reply that ethics is merely a branch of the moral law and that it has already been fully shown what the law cannot do and that we expect ethics to do no more. If, on the other hand, there should be found one willing to act for others than himself and

<sup>8</sup>*Geneene Gratie*, Vol. I, XXII, 161. Translation by Dr. Clarence Bouma.

thus to secure them the blessings of holiness, uprightness, and morality, good ethics will rejoice and only bad ethics will complain.

Principal John Caird<sup>9</sup> furnishes, among recent writers, an admirable illustration of one fully alive to the stern demands of moral law, pure and simple, who is, at the same time, without a sense of the amelioration effected by God's covenant with man. Such transfer as is suggested is, to him, impossible. His criticisms are called out by what he calls the commercial, the forensic, and the sacrificial view of Christ's atoning work, a theme which, while it grows out of the present inquiry, is by several stages beyond it. Principal Caird bases his criticisms on these stern demands of God's law, and, if there be nothing beyond this, they are just and unanswerable. Thus, he says:

"However closely another may implicate himself with us, it is nevertheless true that, beyond our relations to others, to each of us, as spiritual, self-conscious being, there has been given an incommunicable individuality, a moral career to make or mar, each for himself alone."

This is the very situation which, in the divine mind, led to that covenant by which the moral career should be made beyond possibility of being marred.

"So far as it is a moral wrong—an act that not merely does hurt or damage to a fellow man, but transgresses the eternal law of righteousness, which transcends all private interests, asserts its supremacy over all individual wills, and is the principle whereon the very existence and stability of the

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<sup>9</sup>*The Gifford Lectures: The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, Vol. II, 185-197.

Moral Order of the Universe is based—this and the punishment due to it, no individual by an act of arbitrary clemency can remit or cancel."

This is beyond question in the realm of moral law. The figures taken from natural and human nature in action have no bearing whatever on this situation. The law knows no remission. Clemency, arbitrary or otherwise, can cancel none of the demands, whatever be the practice in the criminal procedure of the land. In mere law, sin cannot be transferred nor can its consequences be averted. But, in the impotence of the law, love comes in to do what it cannot do, and this in the second covenant more gloriously than in the first. If, at the present time, the second covenant is discredited, it is only because the first has not been adequately set forth. If the first is real, the second is easy to understand.

Dr. Casper W. Hodge,<sup>10</sup> on the other hand, well says:

"The act of imputation is simply the charging of one with something. It denotes just what we mean by our ordinary use of the term. It does not change the inward state or character of the person to whom something is imputed. When, for example, we say that we impute bad motives to any one, we do not mean that we make such an one bad; and just so in the Scripture the phrase "To impute iniquity" does not mean to make one personally bad, but simply to lay iniquity to his charge. Hence when God is said to 'impute sin' to anyone, the meaning is that God accounts such an one to be a sinner, and consequently guilty and liable to punishment."

Imputation, then, is a term purely forensic or judicial. It has to do with our legal status, not with our personal

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<sup>10</sup>I. S. B. E., Vol. III, 1462.

state. If the two are distinct, we dare not deny one because we recognize the other. Both involve relations common to all men.

3. The Scriptural Literalist is very severe because we can point out neither book, nor chapter, nor verse in which this primal revelation is set forth. This devout man believes the Scriptures from cover to cover and demands an explicit "Thus saith the Lord" for every statement. He mistakes his position for that which holds the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone to be the religion of Protestants. The historic faith, based on Scripture as it is, has always held that "good and necessary inferences" from its very words are warranted, in that reason should interpret what faith receives. Protestants have drawn their inferences, leaving others to draw their own. As it turned out, none have drawn inferences more confidently than some of these devout literalists.

We can only acknowledge the force of the attack which this triple column of literalists makes, but, standing our ground, we still look to see the revelation of love in God's covenant with man.

*God's Covenant with Man the Answer.*<sup>11</sup> We confess at once that we have not this covenant in its original form and that its terms are not easy to decipher because it comes to us broken in pieces and described only in the light of the second covenant, which cannot be broken. We see this first covenant only when it has ceased to be an opportunity, when, by the violation of

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<sup>11</sup>Note 9. *Legal Fictions.*

it, it has become a liability. We read it best in the light of the second covenant, wherein is set forth what further steps love took to restore the men who had broken the first covenant to the favor of God and to blessedness.

1. The Futility of the Attack. In the light thus thrown on the subject emerges into view the reality of a first covenant.

The first covenant has been called the Covenant of Life because of that which it was to secure, and the Covenant of Works because of the basis on which it rested. Might it not also be called the Covenant of Love because of the motive which prompted it? If so, it would stand out in fine contrast with the Covenant of Grace, the second covenant, in which Jesus Christ acted for us who had broken the first covenant.

Having only the broken remnants of the first covenant and the clear reading of the second covenant, we may venture to approximate that covenant in its original form. Surely those who are given to the "reconstruction" of Bible doctrine today will be the last to object to such an effort as this.

Tentatively, approximately, cautiously, we may say that first covenant of God with man seems to have read:

By one man, Adam, obedience may enter into the world and life by obedience, so that life shall pass upon all men for that all, in him, shall have obeyed. For, as by the offence of one, judgment would, under this Covenant, come upon all men to their condemnation, so by the obedience of this one, all men shall be counted as righteous. For as by one man's disobedience, many would be made sinners, so by the obedience of this one many may be made righteous.

This, of course, is at best only what our textual scholars would call a probable reading, of value as far as it goes and with no claim to finality. It proceeds upon the primitive narrative as summarized above and requires that we find in it at least the elements of history. To treat that narrative as a myth, one among many, each as mythical as the other, is not only to leave us in the dark as to the beginnings of moral life, but is to bar the way for this primal revelation which tells of blessings otherwise unguessed of men.

2. Scientific Precedents may be found for this effort to restore and read again that first covenant. The planet Neptune was discovered in 1846, not by the eye but an inference drawn from certain perturbations of the major planets, which could be accounted for only on the hypothesis of another planet of a given size and location. So likewise in 1894, the gas Argon was discovered by Lord Rayleigh and Sir William Ramsay because, in 1892, Lord Rayleigh after determining the density of oxygen and hydrogen found difficulty with nitrogen. Two different methods of preparing this gas yielded results which varied from one another by a thousandth part. This variation suggested to Lord Rayleigh the existence of another gas, and the suggestion was verified. The new gas was called Argon because of its inertia, and the discovery of it led to the further discovery of Helium, Neon, Crypton, and Xenon. In the case of Neptune and in the case of Argon, what was known led to the discovery of what was unknown and of what was necessary to complete the knowledge of the known. The method

is one familiar to the students of physical science, however dubious it may seem to critics and to theologians. The serious man who ponders the physical sciences will not think it amiss if we apply his method to questions of higher significance, in his life and in our own.

To justify this, on logical grounds, we may recall that, with no reference to it, Mr. Alfred Sidgwick<sup>12</sup> has said of theory in general:

"The simplest mind we can imagine as mind at all, must have at least enough theory, or beginning of theory, to pave the way for its observation of fact, how much more, therefore, must the complex and elaborate 'fact' observed by any grown-up person today be seen in the light of theory?"

Prof. Paul Janet<sup>13</sup> reminds us of the comment of La Place<sup>14</sup> on the results of the theorizing of Copernicus:

"Copernicus had the satisfaction to see the observations of astronomers fit in with his theory. . . . Everything in this system told of that fair simplicity which charms us in Nature's means when we are happy enough to know them."

3. The Approach of Biblical Scholars to this view is real if as yet unrecognized. Many of those most eminent in modern Biblical study have been engrossed with other momentous themes, yet this one emerges in unexpected quarters. Dr. Robert Mackintosh<sup>15</sup> confesses that if "we could believe in a divine Covenant, immediately imputing the sin of Adam to his offspring, our difficulty

<sup>12</sup>*Distinction and Criticism of Beliefs*, 156.

<sup>13</sup>*Final Causes*, 203.

<sup>14</sup>*Exposition de la Mechanique Celeste*.

<sup>15</sup>*Christianity and Sin*, 81, 106, 164.

would vanish." He frankly states that of the four possible views as to the entrance of death into the world, this, the federal headship of Adam, is "most logical of all," and, coming to the Reformation period, he says:

"Probably the Federal Theology—Covenant of Works, with Adam; Covenant of Grace, with Christ—describes those findings better than any other terminology could do. While later in origin, and capable of being forced into the service of other systems, that language naturally expresses the very spirit of Protestant Augustinianism."

Dr. Stevens,<sup>16</sup> writing of the Pauline doctrine of Adam and the race, states that:

"It is evident from our passage as a whole that the Apostle considers our sinfulness to have a hereditary aspect; that the first sin stands in some causal relation to sin in general, such as to justify him in figuratively blending them together in a single inclusive conception."

Prof. Wm. M. Ramsay<sup>17</sup> in a statement, certain parts of which are not in accord with the positions taken in this inquiry, says:

"The sin of Adam inflicted incalculable injury on the human race, not by implicating all men in itself, but by involving them in its consequences. Such is the fact of the world; such is the experience of life; such is the Law of Nature. . . . Adam is the typical man, i. e., a fair and typical specimen of the genus man; not less, but if anything more favorably situated than the ordinary man. With every advantage, with no inherited taint, he failed, and with him all men fail, because it is impossible that they should succeed where he could not succeed."

<sup>16</sup>*The Theology of the N. T.*, 358.

<sup>17</sup>*The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day*, 153.

The Bishop of Durham, Dr. Moule,<sup>18</sup> while still in Cambridge, introducing his account of this covenant, reminds us that Scripture "undertakes to tell us truth and to tell it from God," but the message is "in part," leaving much to be learned hereafter. Of the leading passage setting forth the covenants (Rom. 5:12, 21), he says:

"It tells us, with the voice of the Apostle's Lord, great facts about our own race, and its relation to our primeval head, such that every individual man has a profound moral and also judicial nexus with the first man. It does not tell us how those inscrutable but solid facts fit into the whole plan of God's creative wisdom and moral government.

"[The parallel between Christ and Adam] lies in the mysterious phenomenon of Covenant headship, as affecting both our Fall and our Acceptance; in the power upon the many, in each case, of the deed of the One; and then in the magnificent fullness and positiveness of result in the case of our salvation."

Dr. George P. Fisher,<sup>19</sup> opposing the federal view and tracing the history of opinion against it, feels bound to add:

"But what is the Covenant with Adam, as distinguished from the Law of Nature? What is the nature of this positive constitution? The Covenant is, in its essence, a promise—a promise of such blessings, on the condition of obedience, as the rational creature is not entitled to by the Law of Nature. It is a gracious act on the part of God; an act of condescension. He couples with obedience a reward wholly disproportionate to the creature's deserts—namely, eternal life."

<sup>18</sup>*The Expositor's Bible: The Epistle to the Romans*, 143, 151.

<sup>19</sup>*Discussions in History and Theology*, 378.

*The Interpretation of the First Covenant.* Dr. Kuyper,<sup>20</sup> with characteristic caution, believes that it would be out of place to give a careful description of the way in which the covenant was entered into, as we have no data at all. What Scripture offers us is the statement that the first man was placed under the agreement of this covenant and thus the conditions of it and its promises and threatenings were involved. The silence as to particulars, he attributes to the fact that the covenant was "not put together mechanically but is to be viewed as organically operative, the natural expression of the reciprocal positions of the parties involved."

With like caution Dr. Thornwell<sup>21</sup> says:

"This Covenant is a scheme for the justification and adoption of man, and is called a Covenant because the promise was suspended upon a condition with which man was freely to comply. It was not a Covenant in the sense that man was at liberty to decline its terms. He was under obligation to accept as a servant whatever God might choose to propose. He had no stipulations to make; he was simply to receive what God enjoined."

Principal David Brown,<sup>22</sup> in setting forth his interpretations of the teaching of the apostle Paul (Rom. 5:12ff) as to the relation between primal man and the race, says:

"How is this to be understood? Not certainly in the sense of some inexplicable oneness of personality (physical or otherwise) in Adam and all his race; for no one's sin can, in any intelligible sense, be the personal sin of any one but himself. All must be resolved into a Divine arrange-

<sup>20</sup>*Gemeene Gratie*, Vol. I, 161. Translation by Dr. Clarence Bouma.

<sup>21</sup>*Collected Writings*, Vol. I, 268.

<sup>22</sup>*The Epistle to the Romans*, 52, 59.

ment, by which Adam was constituted in such sense the head and representative of his race that his sin and fall were held as theirs, and visited penalty accordingly. Should the justice of this be questioned; it may be enough to reply that men do, in point of fact, suffer death and many other evils on account of Adam's sin—so, at least, all who believe in a Fall at all, will admit—and this involves as much difficulty as the imputation of the guilt which procured it. But should the justice of both be disputed, the only consistent refuge will be found in a denial of all moral government of the world. The only satisfactory key to the manifold sufferings, moral impotence, and death of all mankind, will be found in a moral connection between Adam and his race . . .

"If this section does not teach the whole race of Adam, standing in him as their federal head, 'sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression,' we may despair of any intelligible exposition of it."<sup>23, 24</sup>

This Covenant of Works is set forth in various forms by different bodies of Christian thinkers, perhaps in none more clearly than in the Westminster Confession of Faith (VII: Sec. I, II) and in the Larger Catechism (21, 22):

<sup>23</sup>Dr. W. G. T. Shedd sets forth the benevolence of divine love which prompted the Covenant of Works:

"The object of this probation was, that Adam, by resisting Satan's temptation and persevering in holiness, might secure by his own work indefectibility, or immutable perfection. This was to be an infinite reward for standing the trial of his faith and obedience."

*Dogmatic Theology*, Vol. II, 151.

<sup>24</sup>Dr. Henry B. Smith summed up the case when he said:

"In some ways, as a matter of fact, if not of formal Covenant (it was more than a Covenant, a 'charter'), he (Adam) stood for us, as our representative, so that what he did might be, and was, made over to his descendants, involving them in the consequences, whether of advantage or of liability of his act. And this was not merely a physical sequence, a matter of divine sovereignty alone; it is also represented as a moral, even as a judicial process, in terms too distinct to be evaded. . . .

"Here is doubtless a great, an awe-inspiring mystery, but . . . though it is a great enigma, yet the enigma of man's life would be still greater, and still more insoluble, if this were not so. What we assert is, that this doctrine, with all its fearful shadows, is still only the reading and rendering of the facts of the case; it is not a mere theory to explain the facts, it is the facts themselves, compendiously summed up and stated."

*Christian Theology*, 345, 346.

"The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto Him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of Him, as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which He hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.

"The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience."

"Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, through the temptation of Satan, transgressed the commandment of God in eating the forbidden fruit, and thereby fell from the estate of innocence wherein they were created.

"The covenant being made with Adam, as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity; all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in that first transgression."

Such is the interpretation of God's love to primal man in His covenant. It is an interpretation open to criticism. It comes out of a record difficult to decipher. It dates from a time when law itself was first becoming known to men. It involves an activity of love, satisfying law and then going beyond it, which is too definite for those who view love as an emotion only. Among Biblical scholars, many reject it on what they deem sufficient grounds. Among those who hold it, many seem to hold it in abeyance, as if by sufferance or as a counsel of perfection. How far modern religious thinking has suffered from the want of a modern statement of this covenant can only be fully determined when its regulative place in the history of God's dealings with men is fully recog-

nized.<sup>25</sup> That it lends itself to the present inquiry will, perhaps, scarcely be questioned.

*The Place of the First Covenant.* The recognition of this first covenant is by no means essential to Christian life. Devout and useful men have lived and labored with no perception of it, just as of old men lived by the light of the stars, with no understanding of their movements,—just as Ptolemaic astronomers observed the heavens without even guessing the law of gravitation,—just as men today study the human mind and find no hint of the theory of presentation or of the law of association. It is not to such, however, that we look for progress in knowledge, but to those who feel the pressure of the problem: Given God as He is and man as God made him, endowed with liberty and put under authority, to find liberty, certainty, and blessedness forever.

This interpretation of the primitive record in connection with the proposed rendering of the first covenant by no means ignores other interpretations. Each of these has a value and all are held more or less widely. Of these others, Dr. Strong<sup>26</sup> tells us there are five. What is claimed is that these five must meet the conditions and explain all the facts better than the first covenant does.

It is further to be added that, recognizing the full value of the form in which hitherto the first covenant has been presented, it will be necessary to restate it in the light of

<sup>25</sup>Note 10. *Recent Criticism of the Federal Theology.*

<sup>26</sup>*Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, 593, 628.

what we know now. The Scriptures, as a revelation from God, are our source, interpreted in the light of accurate scholarship. The standard theologians are our guides, but the biologists and the sociologists and the experts in political science will have to lend their aid, if the results are to be worth while. What is offered here is approximate and tentative, awaiting confirmation and correction. A new generation soon to engage, under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, in the reverent study of God's ways with men will arrive and carry forward this engaging study. Perhaps it will be said of them, as it is now said of us: Other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors.

*The Renascence of the Idea of the Covenant.* The Covenant of God with man, thus stated, thus justified by the scientific method, thus approached by modern Biblical scholars, thus defined by systematic theologians and embodied in church symbols, but almost forgotten in practical Biblical study today, appears, by an accumulating mass of evidence, to be on the point of renascence.

This evidence lies in the growing recognition of four great truths, which are:

1. The Fatherhood of God, implying His love for mankind as a race. Controversy emerges here between those who hold that this, taken with the brotherhood of man, is religion enough and those who hold that God is only Father to them that believe on His Son. Under the operation of this first covenant, God the Father comes in, not to abate the law He has given, or to abrogate it, but, in His love, to offer conditions under which

sons, born in His image, might be stabilized or confirmed forever. The Father's love recognized and honored the law and then went beyond it to do what the law could not do. That is, the Fatherhood of God furnishes the motive in His mind for establishing the first covenant.

2. The Solidarity of the Race. Its organic unity is a tenet of modern sociology, the religious significance of which is as yet almost unguessed. The organic unity is but the basis of the moral unity on which so many modern writers enlarge. The moral unity, however, is only a dream or an ideal unless it rests upon the substantial basis of the federal unity in which the first man is recognized as the head or representative of his race. That is, the solidarity of the race is the basis on which the covenant of God with man for mankind rests.

3. Representative Government commands the attention of all who are concerned in the welfare of the state. Its faults are generally recognized, but, admitting them all, it is held today that the public welfare is served best, not by the direct action of the people as a whole, however free and honest, but by representatives qualified and set apart for the work. The result is that the individual both profits from and suffers by measures to which he has not given his approval, to some of which even he may be violently opposed. That the first representative of man was chosen, not by his children as yet unborn, but by God, makes him none the less competent to act. The essence of the arrangement lies not in the method of choice but in the representative relationship. The choice,

having been made by God, God being what He is, was better than any choice man could make for himself. That is, representative government illustrates the method by which the act of one man was to work for the good or for the ill of the race.

4. Assurance for Life under Law. Certitude is the great desideratum of our day. Some seek it in science, some in philosophy, some in religion. The religion which fails to provide it cannot thrive. It is variously defined, but, among Christians, certitude rests upon the Word of God, infallibly conveyed to us in forms sufficiently intelligible to warrant our acceptance and to stimulate our action. The Word of God, as we have it written, affords no more certitude to the men of our day than did that Word, spoken but not written, to primal man. That is, certitude coupled with liberty was the result assured under the first covenant.

Students of the modern sciences will recognize at once these four conceptions. If the federal interpretation of man's primitive condition is to be restated with the view to general acceptance in our day, it will be in the light not only of theology, but of biology, of anthropology, of psychology, of sociology, and of political science as well. With this light shining brightly upon it, it will not be too much to expect that the federal or representative theory will commend itself to men who view life problems as a whole.

## II. THE ORIGIN OF SIN

*The Pauline View of Sin* is the only one that promises any substantial results from our consideration of

the questions that lie ahead of us. His attitude is distinctly indicated in the Acts and in his Epistles. He defined sin, he pointed out its wide reach, he set forth its deadly effects, he warned against its insidious influence, he wept because men would not escape from it. This thoroughgoing exposure of its evil has earned for the Apostle the hearty dislike of those who love and practice it and the disapproval of those who have never seen it as it really is.

Yet in all this exposure and denunciation of sin, the Apostle's attitude is not that either of a scientific investigator tracing its course in a sense of personal detachment from the result, or of a self-righteous Pharisee looking down with scorn upon the sinful. His attitude is that of one of the sinful, conscious of the evil within himself, painfully aware of harm he had done, and aroused lest the full consequence of his sin come upon him. His conversion from sin was not marked by the full conquest of it, but to the end of his days he was given to cry: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24.) And, at the end, with his apostolic labors and sufferings behind him and the spiritual results all around him, he summed up his attitude in this: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (I Tim. 1:15.)

This attitude has always been the perplexity of those who approach the subject in a purely scientific temper, or who, as religious, minimize the effects of sin. The result is that their conclusions are of slight value to men who know they are in its grip. On the other hand, from

the time of Augustine, and his *Confessions*, sinful men have been informed and humbled and then converted and renewed and sanctified by the preachings and teachings of those who, themselves sinners, in conscious daily need of the grace of God in Christ, have, out of their experiences, testified to the evil in themselves, and to their wonderful deliverance in the salvation of grace, and who, day by day, like the publican of old, smiting upon their breasts have cried out continually, "God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13.)

An attitude other than this is futile for the purposes of this inquiry. Anything in this inquiry written from any other attitude or in any other spirit, is unworthy the attention of the serious-minded.

*Sin Antedates Man's Creation.* The origin of sin is generally recognized as one of the mysteries of life, but the question involved is quite other than that which is commonly asked. Instead of asking, Why should God permit sin? the question really is, Why should man made and placed as he was ever consent to sin? Had God made man so that he could not sin or so that he must sin, the moral order would have been denied in one of its essential elements, the freedom of the moral agent.

When, however, we recognize that the mystery is wrapped up in the free choice of evil by one who had been made in the image of God and who dwelt in the midst of the good, we find ourselves baffled, nor is the mystery the less when the choice was that which appeared to be good, although a lesser good than lay in

obedience to God. To choose a lesser good when the highest good was in reach was in itself evil.

To the question, When was the first sin? the answer is difficult. It must have occurred in time, but before man's time, before history began to be made. Scripture gives us scant light, and human speculation only dims that light. The chief clue is that to woman first and then to man, temptation came from without. Intelligent beings there were, other than human—"angels" the Scripture calls them—endowed as man is with the power of choice. Despite current misrepresentations, there is no antecedent improbability of such beings and there is much of Scripture that can be interpreted on no other basis. Of these, one led and others followed, choosing the evil part, deliberately disobeying the moral law by which they, as well as we, are bound and, for this, were cast out of God's presence and consigned to a state in which the consequences of their evil choice fell full upon them. To these, the apostle Jude (6, M) refers: "the angels who abandoned their own domain, instead of preserving their proper rank, are reserved by him within the nether gloom, in chains eternal, for the doom of the great day." (Cf. II Peter 2:4.) Thus "reserved," these angels from "the nether gloom" lost none of their intelligence, for we are expressly told that "the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19), nor did they suffer any limitation of access to other spirits, even to our Lord Himself (Matt. 4:1) and, if we credit His Word, to His disciples, as Judas (Luke 22:3) and Simon Peter (22:31). Their change of moral state showed itself

in the attitude of willful disobedience to and defiance of God and in the set purpose to spread this disobedience and defiance among spirits as yet holy or at least innocent. That such malice against the God who had made them His "ministering spirits" (Heb. 1:14) could begin to be and that it should become the all-absorbing purpose of existence seems incredible, but it is only a part of the mystery. It in no way alters the fact set forth in Scripture, which, while it pushes the mystery back of man to spirits which before man were confirmed in their evil ways, pushes it back of man in such a way that his primal temptation came from without.

This is, of course, discredited in our day by men, who, recognizing evil in the world, view it as a principle, as if principles had some substantial existence apart from persons. They find a parallel to the Scripture teaching in the myths of one or another of the various religions. Among these is the old Persian conception of the eternal struggle between Ormuzd and Ahriman with the outcome ever in doubt, as if the evil one and his followers might after all be able to assert themselves against God, the eternally good. They load the Scripture narrative, succinct as it is, with fanciful figures and superstitious interpretations. They read into Christian doctrine the pictures of the poets. These things done, they turn to ask triumphantly: Can we of our day believe such teachings? Unwittingly, they serve the evil purpose just so long as they deny the evil one or reduce him to a figure of speech, for, according to our Lord Jesus he was a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44.) In modern phrase,

he is an adept in camouflage, successful in the use of the smoke screen, the master mind that plots the evil of the world. He uses and will use men and human institutions as pawns in his play, as the dupes of his malice, until the day when the camouflage is finally torn down and the smoke screen is forever blown away.<sup>27, 28</sup>

*The Origin of Human Sin* is more or less crudely indicated in the ancient narratives preserved by many different peoples. This appears in the exhaustive article on sin prepared under the editorship of Dr. James Hastings<sup>29</sup> in which separate treatment is given to the conception of sin as viewed by American (Indian), Babylonian, Buddhist, Celtic, Chinese, Christian, Egyptian, Greek, Hebrew and Jewish, Hindu, Iranian, Japanese, Muslim, Roman, and Teutonic Peoples, all of whom are to be reckoned with before sin can be said to have been

<sup>27</sup>Wilberforce and Disraeli. One of the conceits of our day is that only now have men come, under the light of scientific truth, to disbelieve in this evil one. To go no further back than 1797, we find William Wilberforce, the statesman and Christian philanthropist, and the sworn enemy of human slavery, saying:

"The existence and agency of the evil spirit, though so distinctly and repeatedly affirmed in Scripture, are regarded by many as a prejudice, which it would now (1797) be a discredit to any man of understanding to believe. But to be consistent with ourselves, we might, on the same principle, deny the reality of all other incorporeal beings."

*A Practical View*, 39-40.

<sup>28</sup>And fifty years later, Benjamin Disraeli, afterwards Earl of Beaconsfield, the Jewish Prime Minister of Great Britain, makes one of his characters say:

"If the personality of Satan be not a vital principle of your religion, I do not know what is. There is only one dogma higher. You think it is safe, and I dare say it is fashionable, to fall into lazy and really thoughtless discrimination between what is and what is not to be believed. It is not good taste to believe in the devil. Give me a single argument against his personality which is not applicable to the personality of the Deity. Will you give that up? And if so, where are you? Now mark me, you and I are young men--you are a very young man. This is the year of Grace 1839. If these loose thoughts, which you have heedlessly taken up, prevail in this country for a generation or so--five and twenty or thirty years--we may meet together again, and I shall have to convince you that there is a God."

*Endymion*, 234.

This indicates a source of disbelief and misbelief concerning God, which is not often taken account of, but it is a source none the less, and the reasoning of Disraeli cannot be invalidated.

<sup>29</sup>Sin. E. R. E., Vol. XI, 528-572.

displaced from the mind of man. On a subject as grave as this, we cannot afford to give weight to what may pass current here or there as the latest word in poetry, science, or philosophy. Loud asseverations serve only to make us suspicious of their sources.

The various views held by these different nations, fanciful and conflicting as they often are, point to a common source such as is to be found in the narrative in the early chapters of the book of Genesis. If, as is so confidently alleged in our day, this is a myth, it is one which prevailed among many widely scattered peoples, and, as has already been shown, it is one which is admirably adapted to exhibit all the elements of the moral order. Dr. James Denney,<sup>30</sup> while adopting the theory of the myth, held that in this record is set forth the beginning, not of science or civilization, but of sin and that it explains "the actual world, with its suffering, toil and death," and that the temptation of the woman by the serpent and the judicial examination of the woman and the man "are marked by extraordinary psychological finesse in the domain of conscience," and that it has "the corroboration of conscience" which can only assent to the teaching that "disobedience to God is that which blights life and works death." The burden of proof, therefore, is on those who treat such a narrative as a mere myth.

*The Fall of Man* is generally held to be set forth in this Genesis narrative. The narrative, of course, is variously interpreted. As far back as Pelagino (A. D. 400), who

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<sup>30</sup>*Fall.* E. R. E., Vol. V, 702.

began as a moral reformer, it has been denied that any serious results for the race attended that event. Despite the formal rejection of these views, they have persisted and fit in well with prevailing tendencies of thought today. The idea that primitive man fell in any real sense stands athwart the pathway of the theory of "the ascent of man," and it is at times dismissed summarily with the remark that, if man fell at all, he fell upwards. On this theory, human history is reread as development, having its variations, but always tending upwards, with the result that evil, especially sin, is hard to be accounted for. Others, more open to historic facts but set upon explaining them to fit in with prevailing evolutionary hypotheses, interpret the Fall as the struggle of the lower and animal impulses against the higher or moral elements of man. This, however, violated one of the first principles of the moral order in that it takes no account of man's accountability as the consequence of a free choice on his part. Further, it presupposes that the moral may evolve from the animal. Further still, it assumes aeons of painful struggle before man emerged but does not explain why creation must suffer. On such a basis, either matter is essentially evil or God delights in the pains of His innocent creatures.

Another view recognizes the moral order and the strong evidence of moral disorder in the toil and pain and shame which prevail among all nations and all classes and seeks to explain these by assuming a pre-mundane Fall, which took place somewhere, somehow, and of some persons of whom we know nothing at all.

This view is as old as the days of Origen and is revived in our times by two recent writers. Canon Peter Greene<sup>31</sup> rightly holds that "if man is not in some sense fallen, not merely the Christian religion but every religion of redemption is needless and obscured," but he holds also that the Fall must have been premundane because when the evil choice was made, "the God of rational omnipotence" had two alternatives, one to destroy the creature who made the evil choice, the other "to try to lead him to repent and to choose holiness again freely." This, of course, denies the alternative provided in the moral order, the penalty of pain, shame, and disappointment that followed upon the first sin, and, because of the representative relation existing, involved all men and the rest of creation.

Rev. C. W. Formsby<sup>32</sup> maintains that:

"Both reason and Scripture teaching agree that the imperfect and sin-stricken human beings on this planet are not the original work of the uncrossed Will of God, but are the results of His Will having been violated. No part of the Natural System is quite as God would have ordained it."

This fact, however, he believes could not have taken place after organic life began on the earth, for the reason that "man is an inseparable part of a system of animal existence which contains in it no evidence of any Fall or change for the worse." That is, recognizing the fact of the Fall and holding to the evolutionary process of organic life, including man, he concludes that the Fall was premundane. His conclusion from this precarious

<sup>31</sup>*The Problem of Evil*, 3, III.

<sup>32</sup>*The Unveiling of the Fall*, XI-XII.

premise cannot outweigh the statements of the Genesis narrative.

Reasonings like these will convince neither those who acknowledge the moral order nor those who detect the gaps in the evolutionary hypothesis. Dr. Orr<sup>33</sup> has stated the view of the Fall, as set forth in the historic faith. It alone meets the demands of the moral order, and, with it, theories concerning the natural history of man will have to be adjusted:

"The narrative of the Fall in Genesis, therefore, is no myth, but a deep historical truth, which no critical theories, or differences in the mode of interpretation, can ever touch. It is not an invention, but the record of a catastrophe that really happened in the beginning of the history of our race, the shuddering memory of which was never lost in the grey ages of primitive humanity. . . . That man knew God in the beginning, and that he was placed by God under a dispensation suited to his condition, involving tests of his obedience, for the furtherance of his moral development; that life would have been the result of his fidelity, and that death (foreign to his nature), with all the other evils, inner and outer, that sin entails, was the issue of his failure—this seems to be most the reasonable explanation we can yet give of the actual state in which the world is found."

*The Aspects of Sin* ought to be by this time fairly clear unless our inquiry thus far has failed of results. The law of God, universal and invariable; the moral law of God, adapted to beings endowed with free will; the limitations of moral law even when one had done his best; the love of God in doing for man what law could not do; and the Covenant of Life as the expression of

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<sup>33</sup>*Sidelights on Christian Doctrine*, 98.

that love—these all join in presenting clearly and fully the various aspects of sin. Accordingly, our inquiry leads towards:

The Nature of Sin, first as an act, then as a state;

The Extent of Sin, in its influence upon the human race;

The State of Sin, as it affects the whole being of man;

The Consequences Incurred, or the penalty imposed for sin;

The Prospects of Relief or Escape from These Consequences offered by the law, the moral law, and the Covenant of Life.

Properly understood, each of these aspects of sin serves to exhibit our need of grace.

### III. THE NATURE OF SIN

Philosophers, ethicists, and theologians in all ages have offered their definitions of the nature of sin, and these are duly recorded in the standard histories of the doctrine. Many of them in our day are relics, of interest only from the antiquarian viewpoint. Others of them, given out long ago, show a recurrence from time to time, astonishing to those who have taken them as new discoveries. Others of them appear to be woven out of the fabric of the newer information we have concerning man's place in nature. All of them, of course, are to be tested by their conformity to law, to the moral law, to the limitation of the moral law, to God's love, and to His covenant as the expression of the love. Among the views held in Christian lands today are:

*Sin as the Result of Evolution* is, naturally, a conception which is widely prevalent. It seems to many to be involved in the current evolutionary philosophy, and it is stated quite as dogmatically as are the other features of this philosophy. It is only fair to recognize that there are forms of this philosophy in which this definition is repudiated, but, these aside, it goes along with the general popular view of evolution.

Bishop Gore,<sup>34</sup> of Birmingham, preaching before the University of Oxford, said:

"If there is any truth in the Bible, it is this: that sin is not a stage in upward evolution, a mere survival of animal tendencies which is gradually being outgrown; nor a mere result of untoward circumstances, or lack of education or experience; but a lawlessness of the human will, a perpetually renewed rebellion against God or neglect of God, which disorders human nature by depriving it of the fellowship of God, and ruins both the individual and the social life, except so far as repentance leads towards amendment, and opens the way for that divine redemption which God's love is ever offering."

Modern preachers who deal with the facts of the moral world are in accord with Bishop Gore at this point. Among the men of our day, there are those who live carefree, with no sense of responsibility, some as if they had never had it, others as if, having had it, they have by some device escaped it. But when all is said, these are rare instances. The average man who speaks out of his everyday experience is as sure of his responsibility as he is of his freedom, and as sure of having to meet his responsibility as he is that it rests upon him.

<sup>34</sup>*Modern Theology and the Old Religion*, 231, 233.

*Sin and the New Psychology.* In a form less crude, sin is defined according to a psychological theory of personality, quite widely held now. Personality, or the consciousness of self, is the distinguishing mark of mind in man and this is dual, the supraliminal and the subliminal. Conscience is as yet but half developed. The subliminal is primitive, and we share it with the animal world, instincts, passions, appetites, all alike. Rev. Reginald S. Moxon<sup>35</sup> holds that the subconscious is "the flesh," the conscious "the spirit." He defines original sin as

"The universal tendency in man, inherited by him from his animal ancestry, to gratify the natural instincts and passions and to use them for selfish ends."

Personality is not a definite entity but is in the making. The evil in it is disruptive, the good is the unifying factor. The perfect personality, of which Christ is our sole example, is wholly strong, because wholly good.

This fits in with current views of evolutionary development but it does nothing more. Personality is a "definite entity" or else there is no moral order. The end of man is not to achieve personality but so to develop a personality that it shall be holy and thus reflect the divine image.

*Sin as a Controlling Self-Consciousness*, due to the power of self-consciousness over the God-consciousness within us. This implies that our original state was not normal and is to be overcome when the God-conscious-

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<sup>35</sup>*The Doctrine of Sin*, 221, 247.

ness attains full control of us. This is the theory of Schleiermacher and it is to be taken as a part of his general system. It reduces sin to a question of consciousness and makes it a necessary stage of human development. It cannot adjust itself to the moral law or explain the sense of responsibility which is in mankind irrespective of his religion.

*Sin as Want of Trust.* This view is that of the Ritschlian School as set forth by its latest representative, Dr. Theodor Haering,<sup>86</sup> of Tuebingen.

“For us Christians the inmost essence of sin consists in its being the perversion of the normal relation to God, want of religion, opposition to the Self-revealing love of God, which excites and demands trust, ‘want of faith.’ . . . God is willing to enter into this communion (with us) and His will of Love makes it a question of whether man is willing to do so. The refusal to have such trust, to surrender oneself to acknowledge God, the course of self-seeking, or resolving to live and die for self,—this is Sin.”

This definition is, of course, all that one could expect when God is held to be only “Holy Love.” It emphasizes, however, the characteristic disregard of the ethical in this system, the limitation of the definition to “us Christians,” the confusion of obedience with faith, and the entire independence of the human will, as if every man were to face the “question” whether he would enter into communion with God. It is also to be noted that after criticizing the definition of sin as selfishness, it is incorporated—“this is sin.” No religious philosophy of modern days will serve better, by its gaps and lacks

<sup>86</sup>*The Christian Faith*, Vol. I, 426.

and breakdowns, to instill a wholesome regard for the law of God than that of Ritschl and his later interpreters. It is significant that neither in the monumental work of Ritschl,<sup>37</sup> nor even in the really critical estimate of it by Dr. Garvie,<sup>38</sup> does the index have any place for the word law. It is not surprising, therefore, that this idea of sin falls before the first testings of God's moral law.

*Sin as Selfishness.* This has its most elaborate statement in the great work of Dr. Julius Muller,<sup>39</sup> which opens with a treatment of sin first as transgression, second as disobedience, and third as selfishness, the last being, he thinks, "the inner unity," the "real principle" of sin. He says:

"The idol, therefore, which man in sin sets up in the place of God can be none other than himself. He makes self and self-satisfaction the highest aim of his life. To self his efforts ultimately tend, however the modes and directions of sin may vary. The innermost essence of sin, the ruling and penetrating principle in all its forms is selfishness."

In this, Dr. Muller finds strong support in America from Dr. A. H. Strong,<sup>40</sup> who says:

"By selfishness we mean not simply the exaggerated self-love which constitutes the antithesis of benevolence, but that choice of self as the supreme end which constitutes the antithesis of supreme love to God."

This he bases on the belief that "the love of God is the essence of all virtue," and that "the different forms of sin can be shown to have their root in selfishness."

<sup>37</sup>*Justification and Reconciliation*, 672.

<sup>38</sup>*The Ritschlian Theology*, 398.

<sup>39</sup>*The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Vol. I, 136.

<sup>40</sup>*Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, 567.

Clear thinking calls for a distinction between the formal and the material in our conception of sin. In our study of grace, the formal engages attention primarily because of its relation to law, without challenging the validity of a definition of the real principle, as Dr. Muller calls it. The question then is whether he and Dr. Strong and those who follow them have found this real principle.

It is, of course, true that many sins are due to selfishness, in the sense of the search by the self for what it views as the pleasant, the useful, or the good. Were happiness the chief end of man and benevolence the sum of virtue, and were the purpose of the universe merely the expression of divine love for man, this definition might stand. Its prevalence indicates the hold which these conceptions have. But, when God's place in His universe is viewed, a broader definition is needed. Wickedness is sometimes unselfish, even self-sacrificing; and, if so, selfishness cannot be the essence of sin. Dr. Charles Hodge<sup>41</sup> has stated this "inner principle" in its Scriptural relations:

"There is a positive element, therefore, in all sin. That is, it is not merely the privation of righteousness, but it is positive unrighteousness. Because the absence of the one in a moral nature is the other. . . . The Protestant symbols and theologians, therefore, in defining Sin, not merely as selfishness or the love of the creature, or the love of the world, which are only modes of its manifestation, but as the want of conformity of an act, habit, or state of man with the Divine Law, which is the revelation of the Divine Nature, have in their support both Reason and Conscience."

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<sup>41</sup>*Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, 188.

*Sin as Indifference or Opposition to the Will of God* has, more recently than the views cited above, been set forth by Dr. H. R. Mackintosh.<sup>42</sup>

"Sin may be defined as indifference or opposition to the will of God, the refusal of faith and love. And, if the will of God be fully revealed in Jesus, it follows that the Christian estimate of sin is a new and creative one. For it declares that Sin is what it is in virtue of its relation to Holy Love. Elsewhere Sin is folly, ugliness, or sickness, not mistrust or rebellion against a love measured by the cross. The difference is not superficial, but radical, inasmuch as it results from a new thought of God. Sin, then, is the explicit or implicit claim to live independently of God, to put something else, be it the world or self, in His place."<sup>43</sup>

*Sin as against the Love of God* appears first in the first sin, if the view set forth above as to God's love in the primal state of man is sustained. It violates the law which said, "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not," but it also abuses the love which had provided every good thing for the use of man and had ordained that Covenant of Life whereby, being free, he should also be made certain of his obedience and so of his blessedness. How much of this primal love of God, man in his original state knew, we can only surmise; but, on the view set out, the love was there, whether it was understood or not.

<sup>42</sup>*Sin.* E. R. E., Vol. XI, 541.

<sup>43</sup>Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson, meeting the conceptions of sin given by Spinoza, Leibnitz, Schleiermacher, and Hegel, says:

"No further ground can be sought for the moral evil of the world than the ultimate choice of persons able to do good or evil; the essential source of evil is the evil will, sin being, in Scriptural language, rebellion against God. God is responsible for the presence of sin in the world only in the sense that He created persons able to sin, sin itself being no necessary or inevitable element in their development; for God's purpose, the moral value of free personal agency could be secured only by liability to sin. No statement of the doctrine of sin which falls short of those requirements does justice to the Christian consciousness. . . .

*The Christian Doctrine of Man*, 295.

The criticism then, of theories which define sin only in relation to the love of God, is twofold. First, the law established the relation on which the love was manifested and without which it could have found no room; and, secondly, they find room for love only after sin began to be, so that had sin never entered, love would not have been manifested. If this should be questioned, it will be necessary to show where else than as indicated above, love might have found a place in the primal state of man. Mere assertion will not suffice.

The influence of some of the theories already mentioned is evident in their words, and the elements noted are undoubtedly contained in the Scriptural idea of sin. It is, however, to be noted that nowhere is the law, the moral law of God, recognized, and that the love which sin is said to refuse is the love shown in the cross of our Lord Jesus which was manifested only in the fullness of time after sin had done its deadly work for ages past.

These brief notes must suffice to indicate current theories. These have been elaborated at length and have attracted, each one, a circle of adherents. Others will appear in the course of our inquiry but the full collection will be found in our standard treatises on the history of Christian doctrine. A hasty survey of them is enough to convince anyone of the conflicts and contradictions which emerge as they are pressed upon the attention of thinking men.

*Sin as Debt and Disobedience.* There remain the three terms which express our relation to law, to moral law. Sin is a debt. (Matt. 6:12; 18:27; Luke 7:41.) Sin

is disobedience. (Rom. 5:19; 10:21; Eph. 2:2.) Sin is transgression, for which five words are used in Hebrew and two in Greek. These, in different forms, appear over one hundred and fifty times. The first of these deals with commercial, the other two with ethical relations, but, as used in Scripture, they all imply a relation in which one acts freely and which, if violated, involves penalties.

Dr. John M. Armour<sup>44</sup> has brought this out very clearly:

"In the last analysis sin and debt agree; not merely in the sense that in the one case as in the other there is obligation to the Law, but that the obligation in the one case as in the other arises from the withholding from the Law what was due. That which the sinner and the debtor owe to the Law is not merely something which ought to be paid, but which ought to have been paid, i. e., both the sinner and the debtor are under condemnation of Law. From this legal condemnation, whether of the debtor or of the sinner, there is but one way of deliverance, viz., the satisfaction of the Law."

*Sin as Transgression.* The third of these terms affords the closest and the fullest view of sin as related to the moral law. The apostle spoke for Gentile as well as Jew when he said: "Everyone who is guilty of sin is also guilty of violating Law; for sin is the violation of Law." (I John 3:4, W.) This accords with the words of our Lord: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments. . . . Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you" (John 14:15; 15:14, A.); and with the words of the apostle Paul: "Where there is no law, neither is

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<sup>44</sup>*Atonement and Law*, 117.

there transgression" (Rom. 4:15, A.); "The power of sin is the law" (I Cor. 15:56, A.).

The words of the apostle John are the more weighty, as it was his pen which wrote the oft-quoted sentence "God is love." (I John 4:8, 16.) Whatever, then, be our conception of God's love, it is in accord with His law: and, likewise, however we interpret His law, it gives full place to His love. The antinomies so carefully constructed and so deeply lodged in many minds of our day have no countenance in Scripture.

The first sin, to which reference has already been made, illustrates this apostolic definition more clearly than any sin which followed in its train. The command was given by God to Adam, personally and explicitly. Man's nature was, at that time, pure and free from the evil tendencies which since then have marked it. As a moral agent, he had freedom of choice. As a responsible moral agent, he faced the alternative to obedience which was so plainly set before him. Under the power of temptation, his free choice was exercised in transgressing the law. That this is the history of the first sin is agreed to by writers who find no place for the Covenant of Works. Dr. Muller,<sup>45</sup> whose definition of the inner principle of sin has been given above, defines it:

"Sin is a repudiation or violation of the Law. The first proposition (in the passage), (that a partial obedience will not satisfy the claims of a Law which demands perfect purity both of will and deed) might be understood as meaning only that transgression of the Law is one out of many ele-

<sup>45</sup>*Christian Doctrine of Sin*, Vol. I, 43ff.

ments in the true conception of sin; but the second defines the thought more accurately, because it puts the two conceptions side by side as co-extensive and logically convertible."

That this is only the first of three steps in Dr. Muller's definition of sin, the "inner course" of which he holds to be selfishness, does not lessen its force.

*A Historic Definition.* The various religious bodies which framed the great evangelical symbols have, each one, dealt with sin, but almost always in its connection with the first sin and original sin. The Westminster Assembly (Larger Catechism 24, Shorter Catechism 14) alone gave us a definition which sets out the nature of sin as such, and so is applicable to all sins. It is as compact as it is complete:

"Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature," or, more briefly,

"Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God."

*Summary.* Sin, then, makes man, whatever his achievements may be, a lawbreaker, a transgressor, with all that this implies. Other terms are also applicable, but this one may never be overlooked with impunity. Our earthly courts brush aside pleadings of a sentimental or aesthetic nature and hold the transgressor to the facts and the law. We can expect nothing less, when we stand before God. At any cost, His law, offended by our sin, must be satisfied. It only aggravates our case that, while law has been defined, love has been refused. The appeal of love has been no more effective than the call of duty. This is the crowning infamy of sin.

#### IV. THE EXTENT OF SIN

If the nature of sin be such as has just been set forth, the momentous question arises at once as to the extent to which mankind has been affected by it. No lover of his race will exaggerate that extent, nor, on the other hand, will he conceal from himself the facts as they develop.

*Sin Is Universal.* There is, however, no serious question as to this extent. Scientific inquiries instituted to discover races, tribes, or individuals which have lived beyond the reach of sin are attended with only negative results. These, of course, only confirm the general confession of mankind that sin is universal. Differing as men do in their idea of sin, the fact of it is so generally recognized that, in an undertaking like this, the proof of it would be surplusage.

*Why Universal?* The real issue among serious men, then, is not as to the extent of sin, but as to the reasons for its universal prevalence. To pass over the obscurantist view, that we are concerned only with the fact while the reason is beyond our reach, various explanations have been put forward, as substitutes for or improvements upon that which is set forth in these words of the Apostle. These cannot be recited here. It will suffice, perhaps, to refer to Bishop J. McConnell,<sup>46</sup> who, after recognizing the nature of sin as transgression of God's law and the freedom of man as implicit in the Biblical account, states that:

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<sup>46</sup>I. S. B. E., Vol. IV, 2799, 2800.

"Unless we accept the doctrine that God is Himself not free, a doctrine which is nowhere implied in the Scripture, we must insist that the condemnation of men as sinful, when they have not had freedom to be otherwise than sinful, is out of harmony with the Biblical revelation of the character of God. . . . We hold fast to the idea of God as a God of justice and love. There is no way of reconciling these attributes with the condemnation of human souls before these souls have themselves transgressed. . . . The child may be given a wrong tendency from birth, not only from hereditary transmission, but by the imitation of sinful parents; yet the question of the child's own personal responsibility is altogether another matter."

What this other "matter" is, Bishop McConnell does not disclose. He rejects the doctrine that men are born under condemnation of sin, but he has no light to give on the way in which sin has become universally prevalent among men. In this negative position many agree, apparently with no appreciation of the fact that, on such a question, the mind refuses to abide in negations. A striking instance of this is Pascal,<sup>47</sup> who says:

"It is very astonishing that the mystery most remote from our knowledge, that I mean of the transmission of original sin, should be a thing without which we can possess no real knowledge of ourselves. Certainly nothing shocks us more than this doctrine, and yet without this most incomprehensible of all mysteries, we are an unintelligible enigma to ourselves. This is the master key to the intricacies and perplexities of human existence. So that however inconceivable this mystery may be, man, without it, is still more inconceivable. . . . For myself, I am free to declare that as soon as I discovered in the Christian religion the doctrine that man is fallen and separated from God, I saw on every side indications of its truth."

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<sup>47</sup>*Thoughts on Religion and Philosophy*, Vol. I, Taylor's Translation, 76-71.

*The Federal Headship of Adam* appears at this point in its full significance. Its place in the divine economy of mankind and the opportunity for the welfare of the race which it offered have been set forth already. We are now face to face with the alternative of that opportunity. When Adam sinned, he sinned not for himself alone but for the race he represented. He acted for mankind, and, as a result, mankind is involved in his sin. Those who complain of God because of the alternative have no sufficient notion of the opportunity afforded us in Adam or of the place held by divine love in the very beginning of human history.

*The Apostolic Parallel.* The well-known parallel drawn by the apostle Paul casts its own clear light on the problem, explaining how, as the same apostle said elsewhere: "The scripture hath concluded all under sin." (Gal. 3:22.) Extracting from this parallel only so much as explains the universality of sin, it reads thus:

"Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and so death passed to all mankind in turn, in that all sinned. For prior to the Law sin was already in the world; only it is not entered in the account against us when no Law exists. Yet death reigned as king from Adam to Moses even over those who had not sinned, as Adam did, against Law. . . . Through the transgression of the one individual the mass of mankind have died. . . . The judgment which one individual provoked resulted in condemnation. . . . Through the transgression of the one individual, death made use of the one individual to seize the sovereignty. . . . The result of a single transgression is a condemnation which extends to the whole race. . . . Through the disobedience of the one individual the mass

of mankind were constituted sinners. . . . Sin has exercised kingly sway in inflicting death." (Rom. 5:12-21, W.)

Dr. Charles Hodge,<sup>48</sup> of Princeton, tersely summarizes the argument of these words as follows:

"Punishment supposes Sin; Sin supposes Law; for Sin is not imputed where there is no Law. All men are punished; they are all subject to penal evils. They are, therefore, all chargeable with Sin, and consequently are all guilty of violation of Law. That Law cannot be the Law of Moses, for men died (i. e., were subject to the penalty of the Law) before that Law was given. It cannot be the Law as written on the heart; for those die who have never committed any personal sin. There are penal evils, therefore, which come upon all mankind prior to anything in their state or conduct to merit such infliction. The ground of that infliction must therefore be sought out of themselves, i. e., in the sin of their first parent."

More recently, and without so definitely accepting the general view, Drs. Sanday and Headlam,<sup>49</sup> of Oxford, interpreting the same passage, say:

"What a contrast does this last description suggest between the Fall of Adam and the justifying work of Christ! For it is true that as Christ brought righteousness and life, so Adam's Fall brought Sin and Death. If Death prevailed throughout the pre-Mosaic period, that could not be due solely to the act of those who died. Death is the punishment of Sin; but they had not sinned against Law as Adam had. The true cause then was not their own Sin, but Adam's; whose fall thus had consequences extending beyond itself, like the redeeming act of Christ. . . ."

After showing that "the full body of his descendants" suffered "the full penalty of Sin," it is added:

<sup>48</sup>*Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, 203.

<sup>49</sup>*The International Critical Commentary: Romans*, 130.

"This proved that something deeper was at work; and that could only be the transmitted effect of Adam's sin. It is this transmitted effect of a simple act which made Adam a type of the coming Messiah."

In modern times, Dr. William Cunningham,<sup>50</sup> of Edinburgh, has stated the federal explanation of the universality of sin very clearly:

"If it be indeed the actual fact that men come into the world with ungodly and depraved natures, which certainly and invariably, until they are changed, produce transgressions and shortcomings of God's Law—actual violations of moral obligations—then, assuredly, the principle that Adam was constituted, and thereafter was held and regarded by God, as the representative and federal head of his posterity, so that they sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression, is the only one that ever has been propounded which makes even an approach towards affording an explanation of this important fact. . . . If men are not satisfied with this explanation, so far as it goes, it is their business to devise or suggest a better."

*Representation, Political and Religious.* To the conclusions of these eminent scholars, it is enough to add that, in our day, no serious objection can be urged to man's responsibility for that to which he has not given his personal consent. The outcome of our present state of representative government can hardly fail to modify some of the conclusions so strictly held by men who see no place for representation in our relations with God. The difference between representative government in its religious and its political forms has been pointed out already. The facts in the recent political situation are

<sup>50</sup>*Historical Theology*, Vol. I, 338.

familiar. The constitutional governments of the world were in mortal combat with the remaining autocracies of the world. This means that every citizen of these constitutional governments was bound by the action of his representatives, whether he himself consented to that action or not. His life, his liberty, his property, all were tied up in the decision of those representatives. The citizen may not have favored a declaration of war, or the method of conducting the war, or the ends sought in the war, but his personal opinion carried no weight beyond his individual vote. He was drafted into national service, and perhaps called upon to die, he was subjected to restrictions upon his food and wear and travel which were trying in the extreme, he was taxed upon his property and his income to a point unheard of hitherto. He fought, he was in restraint, he paid, with no regard to his individual views on those questions. And yet no one may reasonably doubt that these constitutional governments embody the highest development of political freedom, and that the peace of the world demands that just such governments shall supplant the effete autocracies which have oppressed for ages their own and alien peoples too. Representation in political relations is a means of achieving the largest liberty and the highest good. It has also its dangers if the representatives prove unfaithful to their trust.

In this view we may read the teaching of the Westminster Assembly<sup>51</sup> on the extent of sin:

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<sup>51</sup> *Shorter Catechism*, Ans. 16.

"The Covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression."

## V. THE STATE OF SIN

We enter here upon a question of supreme concern for everyone who is involved in sin. It is conceivable that it be viewed as the individual transgression of the law and even as affecting the whole race of man and yet bring results which are only enough to call for regret and some effort at amendment without involving anything tragic or direful. This is a view which possesses great numbers of mankind and accounts for their disregard of the grace of God.

*Sin as Act Only.* Justification for this view is afforded by writers who begin with strenuous denial that sin is a state, in any sense of the word. These writers limit sin to acts, the free conscious acts of moral agents, and outside of these they claim there is nothing for which men can be held responsible. This has been urged in different ages of Christian thought, especially since the fifth century. A recent statement of it is by Dr. F. R. Tennant,<sup>52</sup> of Cambridge, who says:

"The term 'Sin,' and its derivatives, can surely only be applied to the issues of the will. We speak, indeed, of good and bad states, and of good and bad characters; but a moral state or a character is the result of voluntary action. If we apply the term sinful to hereditary temperament, to natural impulses or appetites as such, we must not only commit our-

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<sup>52</sup>*The Child and Religion*, 170; cf. *The Concept of Sin*, 209-233.

selves to a Manichaean doctrine of evil, but also, if we would be logical, must apply ethical terms to the conduct of the brute creation."

Dealing with the origin of sin in the individual child, Dr. Tennant<sup>53</sup> says:

"In the first place it must be asserted that what is inherited or original is not sin or taint but non-moral qualities; further, that this inheritance is not due to a fall of the race which has damaged the moral constitution of mankind, but is the necessary outcome of the regular course of Nature; and lastly, that our inheritances of stock-tendencies is not to be traced to the first human parent of our race as a first cause, but to the non-human ancestry which preceded him."

Dr. Tennant defines his general position quite clearly when he refers to "those writers who follow what must in this instance be called the unfortunate example of St. Paul and use the term 'Sin' as he sometimes allowed himself to do."

*Sin as from God.* These bold views from England, which cut for us the Gordian knot of sin at one blow, are supported by the views, bolder still, of Dr. F. E. D. Schleiermacher, of Germany, in his learned work *The Christian Faith* (Sections 79-85). As his American interpreter, Dr. George Cross,<sup>54</sup> says, his method requires that "Sin" be treated from the standpoint of the personal consciousness. "Sin and the consciousness of Sin are not to be separated." Accordingly, Dr. Cross interprets this view as follows:

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>54</sup>*The Theology of Schleiermacher*, 188.

"For us sin exists as a universal fact of consciousness. Therefore there is a sense in which God is the author of sin; but, on the other hand, in the Christian consciousness, sin and grace are antithetical and, therefore, if there is not an antithesis within the divine nature, God cannot be the author of Sin in the same sense in which He is the author of Grace. . . . So that the conclusion of the matter is: God is the author of sin, but the author of sin only in the sense that it should exist as gradually disappearing in the presence of grace."

This view of Schleiermacher deserves place in a theological museum as a rare specimen of the extremes to which men will go to maintain their opinions. With all their differences, Christian scholars have always agreed that God the holy, just, and true can never in any sense be the author of sin. When, in their polemic, they have charged one another with this view, the charge has been indignantly repelled. Whatever solution be adopted, this one is barred by common consent.

Aside from this, the view embodied in these extracts represents fairly well the belief of many, or at least what many would like to believe. If it could be sustained, the relief to Christian thought would be immense, for then there would be no state of sin, but only the acts of sin to deal with.

*The United Voice of Christendom.* Unfortunately, however, this belief has never had any place in the faith of the Christian church. Whatever differences have arisen among the churches, Reformed, Lutheran and Catholic, both Greek and Roman, they speak with one voice against a solution so easy because so regardless of

the facts. The universal prevalence of sin cannot thus lightly be explained. Something behind the free choice of the millions of human wills there must be, to account for the results we see in this sinful world.

Dr. A. A. Hodge,<sup>55</sup> of Princeton, has expressed this with great force:

“As it is absolutely impossible for a man to believe, when the dice are thrown sixes successively, a thousand times, that the dice are not loaded; so it is a thousand times more impossible to believe, when every human being of all nations and generations, without a single exception, begins to sin the instant he enters moral agency, that his will is not biased by a previous effectual tendency in his nature to sin.”

*The State of Sin Described.* The discussion of this question has developed sharp differences of opinion, which are expressed under the names of the various outstanding representatives of each school from the earlier to the later periods of church history. To theological scholars these great names are enough to define the view, at least in a general way; but to others, the names are only bewildering. The purpose of these lectures will be served sufficiently if we pass over these great names and content ourselves with statements which, while not exhaustive, will be generally understood.

The state of sin may be described under various figures and relations. The list of words cited above as expressions for sin will indicate how great this variety is. Modern religious literature, and some that is not professedly religious, affords many striking illustrations.

<sup>55</sup>*The Atonement*, 86.

There is, perhaps, none more significant than that of Dr. William James,<sup>56</sup> of Harvard, who studied religious experience from the severe standpoint of the scientific observer. His conclusions have been cited in preceding lectures sufficiently to assure us that he has no sympathy with the general views advanced in these pages. This, of course, lends additional force to his account:

“The moralist must hold his breath and keep his muscles tense; and so long as the athletic attitude is possible all goes well—morality suffices. But the athletic attitude tends ever to break down, and it inevitably does break down even in the most stalwart when the organism begins to decay, or when morbid fears invade the mind. To suggest personal will and effort to one all sicklied o'er with the sense of irremediable impotence is to suggest the most impossible of things. What he craves is to be consoled in his very powerlessness, to feel that the spirit of the universe recognizes and secures him, all decaying and failing as he is. Well, we are all such helpless failures in the last resort. The sanest and best of us are of one clay with lunatics and prison inmates, and death finally runs the robustest of us down. And whenever we feel this, such a sense of the vanity and provisionality of our voluntary career comes over us that all our morality appears but as a plaster hiding a sore it can never cure, and all our well-doing as the hollowest substitute for that well-being that our lives ought to be grounded in, but, alas! are not.”

In this utterance, so frank and so pathetic, it is easy to note several elements. There is the sense of “impotence” which is “irremediable,” the craving to be “recognized” and “secured” in the midst of “helpless failure,” the confession of a “sore” within us which morality can-

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<sup>56</sup>*The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 46.

not cure and of a state of "well-being" which is not "grounded in our lives." These are not theological phrases but they can easily be interpreted to express the outlines, at least, of that state of sin into which mankind came by the first transgression of God's law.

*Guilty before God.* The law of God, under which we all begin to be, defines for us at once the first element in the state of sin. That law, as has been already set forth, holds as the alternative to our obedience, a penalty which transgressors must suffer. The moral agent who does not obey the law is, at once, held liable to the penalty. When, then, Adam as our federal representative, by his evil choice, threw away his opportunity and ours, we, as well as he, became guilty and since then, as the apostle Paul says, every mouth has been stopped and all the world has become guilty before God. (Rom. 3:19.)

It is not surprising that, with this sad outcome of the covenant, given though it was in God's love for mankind, men should turn frantically away from it to resume that relation by which each moral agent was to stand for himself and be judged by his own deeds alone. Had the outcome been that, through Adam's choice, we were all confirmed in holiness and blessedness, it is very certain that no one would have felt his liberty invaded, no one would have demanded the right to individual trial. Could we, then, with any reason, seek escape from the covenant when it turned to our disadvantage? Surely we cannot stand in it when it brings gain and flee from it when we suffer loss. The covenant being broken, it was too late to annul it. The law had been transgressed,

the race of man had been involved, and each of us, prior to any acts of our own, is in God's sight a sinner out of whose heart will come sins of his own as soon as he begins to act for himself. The words of the apostle Paul ought not to be misunderstood: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12); "by one man's offence death reigned by one" (vs. 17); "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation" (vs. 18); "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (vs. 19); "in Adam all die" (I Cor. 15:22). Deep as are the questions stated by these plain words, the light they throw upon our state of sin enables us even in our sin to see that God has been not only fair and just but good and kind as well, and that our fall casts no blot upon His love.

*Various Explanations.* Eminent theologians, burdened with the questions which hover around this explanation of our state of sin, have sought others. Dealing only with those who, according to Dr. Beecher, recognize that there is in us all, prior to voluntary action, inherent corruption, we find this corruption accounted for in different ways.

It would require many pages to classify, relate, and examine these, for they range over all the region in which man's mind and his will have come into conflict with God's Law and His Covenant. They are of many shades and forms of statement. They all agree in denying the place of the Covenant of Works in fixing the state of sin, especially that our guilt is the cause of that infirm and corrupt state in which we are by nature

"helpless failures in the last resort." Consequently, they must needs find some other reason for that corruptness which they all acknowledge.

These reasons may be mentioned in the order of their approach to the view that, by the sin of Adam, we all become guilty before God. One holds that, by this innate corruption, we incline to actual sin; another, that by it we are certain actually to sin; another still, that we did actually each one sin, when Adam sinned. These steps of approach can only be mentioned here.

1. The Tendency to Sin. The first step finds our corrupt nature derived from Adam, so that in all of us there is this inclination or tendency to sin. The inclination, however, is not sin, and it becomes sin only when, by the exercise of our free will, we make it our own. The corruption of our nature, serious as it is, is offset by the grace which is given to all men alike, so that it remains for each one to choose whether he will accept the grace, which they claim he is fully able to do. Salvation is thus a joint affair between God's grace and man's will. This appeals to many until they inquire why a God who is holy, just, and good should bring upon humanity a state of corruption and misery when humanity had done nothing to deserve it. If this be God's sovereign decree, it is a decree which is neither just nor good, and men may feel themselves not guilty but injured only by the Fall. Moreover, the will of man in the state of sin has itself lost the power it had at first, as will appear more fully later.

2. The Certainty of Sin. The second step finds that this inclination to sin is more than an inclination, that, with the corruptness with which we are born, we are not only liable but certain to sin when we reach the age of responsibility. That all men, without exception, do sin is the reason why they are held personally guilty before God.

This, however, to most men will look as if we are made guilty without a chance to escape. If the natures with which we are born are certain to sin, the responsibility must go behind us even to God himself. The chance which the race had in Adam was fair; but here there was no chance at all, only a certainty of sin from the very beginning. The former has its difficulties, but, with what we know of God's law and covenant, they are slight when compared with those we encounter here.

3. The Sin of Generic Man. The third step finds that the corruption is due to guilt, the guilt of the first sin, and that the first sin was really our own, that Adam was "generic man" and each of us acted when he acted and so is responsible with him for what he did.

This realism is, of course, merely a philosophical theory, without warrant in Scripture. It involves a use of the natural headship of Adam and the organic and moral unity of the race which breaks down under the exact demands of God's law. Further, if we were really in Adam, we are responsible not only for the first sin, but for all his sins afterwards. If so, why not for the sins of all who came after him? In the judgment of most men, it is enough that we are involved in Adam's

first sin. With it, and our own sins, we have now more than we can carry.

It cannot be expected that the able and devout advocates of these theories will regard these very brief statements of their views as sufficient, or the criticisms of them as conclusive. To do more, however, would involve these pages in discussions which would prove interminable, as the history of doctrine has proved, and would lead to theological niceties of distinction which, in our day at least, are not generally understood.

*The Sin of Our Representative.* With all the questions started by God's law and His covenant, it may, therefore, be held that no explanation of our state of sin is so simple, so Scriptural, so "logical," as Dr. Mackintosh calls it, as this of the Westminster Shorter Catechism (Q. 16): "The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression."<sup>57</sup>

*Self-Corrupted.* It is in this connection that there came into use the phrase "total depravity," which has always awakened such strong resentment in the self-righteous heart of man. The term as used by careful writers leaves ample room for the conviction that, bad as is our state of sin, we ought not to make it out worse than it is. Scripture itself affords us no warrant for so doing. Cer-

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<sup>57</sup>The *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, in stating the Covenant of Works, says: "There appears no way in which hereditary corruption could fall as a spiritual death upon the whole human race by the just judgment of God unless some sin of that race preceded, incurring the penalty of that death. For God, the supremely just Judge of all the earth, punishes none but the guilty."

Quoted by Dr. A. A. Hodge, *The Atonement*, 104.

tain facts are beyond dispute; one is that, even in the presence of sin, there is among men a kindness, a generosity, a moral rectitude, a degree of virtue, which are certainly not in themselves sinful. Another is that men are not equally affected by sin and that, in the scale of morality, they vary greatly even in lands where they have only the light of nature to guide them. Still another is that there is probably no man who is as sinful as he might be, none from whom all moral restraints have been removed. Once more, there is in sinful men a power to know moral good, to feel the moral appeal, to amend his ways accordingly, and Scripture furnishes instances in which men have done this.<sup>58</sup>

Dr. Charles Hodge,<sup>59</sup> of Princeton, with clearness says:

“By total depravity, is not meant that all men are equally wicked; nor that any man is as thoroughly corrupt as it is possible for a man to be; nor that men are destitute of all moral virtues. The Scriptures recognize the fact, which experience abundantly confirms, that men, to a greater or less degree, are honest in their dealings, kind in their feelings, and beneficent in their conduct. Even the heathen, the Apostle teaches us, do by nature the things of the Law. They are more or less under the dominion of conscience, which approves or disapproves their moral conduct. All this is perfectly consistent with the Scriptural doctrine of total depravity, which includes the entire absence of holiness; the want of due apprehensions of the divine perfections, and of our relation to God.”

This conception of the practical effects of our self-corruption is recognized in the symbols of the historic evan-

<sup>58</sup>Cf. *Divine Government*, by Dr. James McCosh, 369ff.

<sup>59</sup>*Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, 131.

gelical churches. It is coming again into recognition in the general religious thought of our day.

*Sin a Power as Well as a Process.* Dr. Ramsay<sup>60</sup> holds that sin as the contrary idea of righteousness, consists in the movement of man away from God, that is to say, in the increasing divergence of his spirit from that of God, and the increasing opposition between his nature and the nature of God. It is simply a definite, unchanging fact; it is a process; and its character is to become accelerated as it continues. Moreover, sin is not merely a process; it is also a force, and it becomes in itself a power ever growing stronger and stronger to draw man away from God.

The late Rev. Charles Kingsley<sup>61</sup> said:

"Your sins are killing you by inches. . . . Every sin you commit with your spirit. . . . helps to destroy your spiritual life, and leaves you bad, more and more unable to do the right and avoid the wrong, more and more unable to discover right from wrong; and that last is spiritual death, the eternal death of your moral being. . . . (The sinner is) always haunted by the shadow of himself, knowing that he is bearing about in him the perpetually growing death of sin."

*The Testimony of Scripture.* This self-corruption, or total depravity, extends then to the entire nature. It is total in that it reaches every faculty of our being and every part of our organism, moral and mental and physical.

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<sup>60</sup>*The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day*, 131.

<sup>61</sup>*Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of His Life*, Vol. II, 209, 210.

As early as the days of Noah, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence; and God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." (Gen. 6:5, 11, 12.) Isaiah's words as to Israel, as the chosen people of God, cover with equal force the race of men, and apply not merely to the social but to the religious life as well: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: . . . the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." (Isa. 1:4-6.) "My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he fenced it . . . and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." (5:1, 2.)

The apostle Paul describes the state of the world: "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Rom. 1: 21, 22.) "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." (3:9.)

*Human Nature Involved.* This self-corruption is not merely outward. It begins in the sources of thought and

action within. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psa. 51:5.) "The heart is deceitful . . . and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9.) He who "knew what was in man" said: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, coveteousness, wickedness . . . all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." (Mark 7:21-23.)

It affects the mind, the understanding: "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be." (Rom. 8:7, A.) "The god of the present age has blinded their unbelieving minds so as to shut out the sunshine of the Good News of the glory of the Christ." (II Cor. 4:4, W. Cf. Eph. 4:17-19.)

It debases the affections: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections." (Rom. 1:26.) "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; . . . inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." (Col. 3:5.)

It enslaves the will: Our Lord said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin." (John 8:34, A.) "Do you not know that if you surrender yourselves as bondservants to obey any one, you become the bondservants of him whom you obey, whether the bondservants of Sin (with death as the result) or of Duty (resulting in Righteousness)?" (Rom. 6:16, W.) "Miserable wretch that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? God will!" (Rom. 7:24, M.)

These passages are but a few out of the many with which Scripture abounds. They are treated in detail by our Biblical theologians and their significance is variously estimated. When all has been said as to sources and surroundings and context, the force of this testimony remains practically unimpaired and the self-corruption of man stands out as a ghastly fact of all human life.

The historians, the moralists, the reformers, the preachers, of every age have dealt so fully on this that, in an inquiry as well-defined as ours, further enlargement is not necessary.

Our own day yields its own share on this self-corruption. Dr. Charles E. Jefferson,<sup>62</sup> of Broadway Tabernacle, New York, writing of revelations made by the European War, says:

"We are forced to confess that there is no conceivable cruelty which man will not inflict, no outrage which man will not commit, no brutality of which he is not capable, no depth of infamy to which he is not willing to descend. All the cruelties and brutalities and butcheries and atrocities of which you have read in history have all been matched before your very eyes in the twentieth century. Let no man hereafter ever dispute the Christian doctrine of sin. Let no one ever deny the depravity of the human soul. Let no one scorn the teaching that man is a fallen creature, and that humanity without Christ is lost!"

These four—our guilt before God, the want of that purity and integrity in which our race began its history, the self-corruption which followed at once upon our

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<sup>62</sup>*What the War Is Teaching*, 62.

guilt, and the long catalogue of vices, crimes, and offenses generally due to this self-corruption—indicate the Scriptural teaching as to our state of sin. It is not surprising that philosophers who are given to tracing what they call “the ascent of man” from a savage original find in these facts an obstacle for their theories which they cannot overcome, and, accordingly, seek to discredit the Scriptural record in which they are set forth. Even if the Scripture be discredited, the facts of everyday life in relation to the moral law which holds us all alike give no room for these theories. Like all the other specious pleas which sinful men have put forward to shield themselves, this one is swept aside, and, with the rest of us, the pleaders are brought before God, sinners, whose only hope is in His grace.

## VI. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

The consequences of sin may be stated in terms as various as the aspects in which it is presented, some of which have been enumerated. Each of these is, in its own way, important. It is quite as important that no one of them supplant another and that, among them all, the primary and the fundamental be recognized as interpretative.

Thus, the consequences of sin are, at times, represented in Scripture, and in general use, as the result of organic processes, such as vegetable reproduction: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 6:7); or of animal reproduction: “They conceive mischief, and bring forth

iniquity. They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web; he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper" (Isa. 59:4,5); "Then Desire conceives and breeds Sin, while Sin matures and gives birth to Death" (James 1:15, M.).

At other times, these consequences are viewed as revenue or the fair business return upon an investment, whether of money or of labor: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?" (Isa. 55:2.) It underlies the parables of the two debtors, when one of them said, "Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all" (Matt. 18:26); also the parable addressed to Simon the Pharisee: "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty" (Luke 7:41). It appears in the word of the apostle Paul: "The wages paid by Sin are death." (Rom. 6:23, W.)

*Theories of Punishment.* Punishment, therefore, follows justly upon sin. The theories on which it is based differ widely. It is almost an interpolation to import them into this inquiry, yet they need to be mentioned. One is that punishment has as its primary end the good of the offender, and that its measure is to be gauged by that end and all else set aside as superfluous. Another is that the value of punishment is preventive and deterrent, that by the sufferings of some, others may be warned against evil doings. Another yet views punishment as the expression of resentment against those who have wronged the punisher and that it requires only his

appeasement which, in the case of one who is merciful, ought to be easy.

It is at once apparent that these theories are framed in disregard of the essential relation of punishment to sin. Dr. R. W. Dale<sup>63</sup> has summed up the objections to them all as failing to meet "our strongest and most definite moral convictions":

"Suffering inflicted upon a man to make him better is not punishment but discipline. . . . Suffering endured for the sake of benefiting society is not punishment; if accepted voluntarily, it is the heroism of self-sacrifice; if inflicted by arbitrary authority, it is injustice on the one side and martyrdom on the other. What a man suffers from the resentment of another is not punishment, but mere persecution and annoyance, unless the suffering is the effect of moral indignation provoked by real or imaginary wrongs. . . .

"That the suffering inflicted is deserved is a necessary element in the conception of punishment."

Dr. Dale regards punishment as "pain or loss inflicted for the violation of Law." No view other than this will satisfy the requirements of the moral law.

*The Penalty of Transgression: Death.* Penalty, therefore, expresses and measures the punishment due for sin. It is imposed deliberately and judicially, according to the sin of each. As the fundamental consequence of sin, no other can approach it in interest for all of us.

We are not left in any doubt as to the nature of this penalty. One word is enough to express it and that a word which finds place in all languages, describing an experience to which no human being can long be a

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<sup>63</sup>*The Atonement*, 443.

stranger. It enters the Scripture narrative as God's warning against sin ere ever sin began to be, and afterwards it is never absent from that narrative. Our first parents heard the warning: "In the day that thou eatest thereof [the tree of the knowledge of good and evil] thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17.) When sin had come, the penalty followed quickly. Judgment was pronounced on each of the guilty trio, according to the offence of each: First, on the serpent: "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" (3:14); second, on the woman: "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children" (vs. 16); third, on Adam: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (vs. 17-19). The prophet Ezekiel is explicit: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (18:4.) The apostle Paul points out that penalty when he speaks of the hard and "impenitent heart" which treasures up unto itself "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," sending "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." (Rom. 2:5, 8, 9.) "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law." (I Cor. 15:56.)

*Elements in the Conception of Death.* This summary includes at least three distinct elements, and we can understand death only as we carry all three in our minds, prepared to meet any one of them anywhere, whether in reason, in conscience, or in Scripture. One of these is perhaps the most commonplace, the dissolution of the bond between body and soul, called physical death. Another carries the effect into the soul and is called spiritual death; while the third projects the second forward into endless future and is called eternal death. Each of these bears directly upon our inquiry into man's need of grace.

*Physical Death*, the separation of the soul and body, while sorrowfully admitted everywhere as a fact, is not, even among Christian writers, always acknowledged as an element in the penalty of sin. It is held by some to be the normal end of life rather than the penal consequence of sin. It is represented as coming to each one of the human race, irrespective of what our first father did.

Dr. John Tulloch,<sup>64</sup> of St. Andrews, expresses the view that "Death, as a simple physical fact, is unaffected by moral conditions." He adds:

"To the modern mind death is a purely natural fact. It comes in course of time as the natural issue of all organism, which by its very life spends itself, and hastens towards dissolution as an inevitable end. . . . The physical fact of death, therefore, cannot be traced to sin as its sole cause."

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<sup>64</sup>*The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, 76, 163.

This view is supported not only by writers like Dr. James Martineau and Dr. Newman Smyth but by a body of biological opinion which finds its reasons in the physical organism.

1. Life Brief and Futile. Scripture may be quoted in support of this view, in the familiar words: "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." (Ps. 103:15, 16.) Over and over the same thought recurs (Isa. 40:6-8; James 1:10; I Peter 1:24). The brevity of life and the suddenness of its end are clearly taught; but it is straining Scripture to claim that anything more is taught, as if the end of man is no more than the end of grass and flowers. Further, the express teachings of our Lord seem to forbid such dubious inferences: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. . . . Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matt. 10:29, 31.) "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep?" (Matt. 12:11, 12.) The brevity of life—vegetable, animal, and human alike—is too narrow a basis on which to build a theory that death is a "purely natural fact." Man dieth not as the beast dieth. Theories based on psychological facts are insufficient because they make no account of moral facts. Man was of a make that flowers and sheep are not.

Though liable to sin, and death, he was made to live. His body has an immortality which, while mutable, was real. The warning given at the beginning (Gen. 2:17) implies this. Death was a contingency only, the needful alternative in case of transgression, the reserve held by God lest man disobey and defy Him; but it was a contingency only. Had man chosen as every rational consideration prompted, death would have been for mankind unknown. Calvin has with insight suggested that, in this case, man would have left this earth by translation, as Enoch and Elijah did. The suggestion alas! has no practical value for us men.

The testimony of Job illustrates Old Testament faith in spite of the sense of the brevity and futility of life. In his utter darkness of spirit, he cried out: "Man dieth, and is laid low; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (Job 14:10, A.) "If a man die, shall he live again?" (vs. 14) and yet, afterwards, he was able to say: "As for me I know that my Redeemer liveth, and at last he will stand upon the earth: and after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, then without my flesh shall I see God; whom I, even I, shall see, on my side, and mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger." (Job 19:25-27, A.) Psychological theories, born of the moment, cannot withstand this age-long faith. Physical death, then, was an interruption, not the appointed end of normal life. It was an element in that penalty visited on the race because of Adam's sin. Once more we hear the words: "By one man sin entered into the world, and

death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12.)

2. Weakness, Disease, and Pain. Physical death, moreover, as one element in the penalty of sin involves far more than the separation of soul and body. Along with it come those disturbances of our bodies which, sooner or later, lead to it. Weakness, disease, infirmity, injuries, whether by accident or malice, are to be included in that penalty. Our Lord corrected the friends of Job on this point, when He taught that the evils of life were not due to the individual sins of individual sinners. The Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices were not sinners above all the Galileans; the eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam fell were not sinners above all that dwelt in Jerusalem. The judgment was upon all, for, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:1-5.) When the disciples asked Him of the man, blind from birth: "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." (John 9:1-3.) The individual suffers with the race, and the suffering is not merely educative or disciplinary, however it may be overruled to these ends. It is part of that penalty we pay for sin.

This comes out the more clearly when we reflect that physical evils do not stop with man.

The apostle Paul teaches: "The Creation fell into subjection to failure and unreality (not of its own choice, but by the will of Him who so subjected it)." (Rom. 8:

20, W.) As a result, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (vs. 22). Nature suffers by reason of the sin of man.

*Spiritual Death.* The dissolution of soul and body and the pains of the creation, while they are a part of, do not exhaust the penal consequences of sin. The primitive narrative brings this out forcibly. The penalty began long before physical death overtook our first parents. It was imposed at once, and this is the record of it: "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Gen. 3:24, A.) The man and the woman both were physically as much alive as before. They thought, they spoke, they acted, as they had done since they began to be. There was then a sense in which death laid hold of them before soul and body parted. When Drs. Sanday and Headlam<sup>65</sup> interpret death as "in the first instance physical," they are careful to add that "the Apostle does not draw the marked distinction that we do between this life and the life to come. The mention of death in any sense is enough to suggest the contrast of Life in all its senses."

1. Dead While Living. There is, then, a sense in which death begins while men are still in the body of this flesh and in the physical, intellectual, aesthetic, and moral activities of ordinary life. The woman of pleasure is dead while she liveth. (I Tim. 5:6.) It is a death as real as that which men call death, and the prelude of

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<sup>65</sup>*International Critical Commentary: Romans*, 132.

that which Scripture calls "the second death." The sense is clear when we realize that life in its fullness is, in Scripture, viewed as the favor and the presence of God. It comes out in the primitive record when our first parents "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," and when, just after their sin, they "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." (Gen. 3:8.) It is expressed in later Scripture, such as: "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." (Ps. 16:11.) "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." (Ps. 17:15.) "We know that, when he shall appear . . . we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:2.) With this high view of life, the reward of the blessed, death as its opposite means the loss of that favor, an existence which is conscious, responsible, and active, but which continues under God's displeasure and with the impairment of every faculty of that nature which came from God's hand, pure, responsive, and strong for all good. Accordingly, we find in Scripture, largely in the New Testament, a class of passages concerning death which cannot be explained as the separation of soul and body. The memorable word of our Lord to Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews: "Except a man be born again [from above], he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh. . . Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:3, 6, 7); His word to the Jews who sought to slay Him: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The

hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (5:25); the words of the apostle Paul: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1); "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph. 5:14); "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him" (Col. 2:13). These passages underlie the teaching of Scripture as to regeneration. They point to a state which is called death and which is found along with physical life. It is the death of that part of us which was made for fellowship with God and which is called "spiritual" to distinguish it from the other phases of human life.

2. The Signs of Spiritual Death are clear. In it, men are so changed that they become enemies of God (Ps. 68:1; Rom. 5:10), aliens from Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise (Eph. 2:12; Col. 1:21).<sup>66</sup>

In spiritual death, the mind is disordered: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14; cf. Eph. 4:18), so that man will not and cannot understand the gospel save as the grace of God enables him. The affections are debased, as the long catalogue of passion and lust show. (I Cor. 3:3; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5, 8, 9; James 1:21; I Pet. 2:1.) The will is enslaved, as our Lord taught: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that

<sup>66</sup>Compare, 191, 192.

committeth sin is the bondservant of sin." (John 8:34, A.) The apostle Paul exclaims: "Thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were bondservants of sin, ye became obedient . . ." (Rom. 6:17, A.), and the apostle Peter describes those who promise liberty but "themselves are bondservants of corruption" (II Peter 2:19, A.).

3. Men Given Over by God. If it should be urged that these are marks of a state of sin rather than consequences of sin, it will be enough to note that the withdrawal of such restraints as withhold men from sin is God's penalty for sin, and this is spiritual death.

This death implies no loss in any of the original faculties of the soul. Neither does it impair free agency, for the man who chooses sin does it as freely as if he chose the good he would have chosen had he remained holy. It would be a pitiable state, and one entirely unworthy of a God just and kind, if man were bound under sin in such a way that, desiring to escape, he could not. The sad fact is that, once dead in trespasses and sins, there is no desire to escape until the grace of God lays hold of us and makes both able and willing.

4. Human Ability and Inability. There is then a distinction between what one is by nature unable to do, and that which by reason of sin he loses the power of doing. Nature as first given to man is one thing; nature as we are born with it is another. Nothing beyond the power of the nature first given to man can ever be required of us, as that we should know all things or be able to do all things. In this sense, ability is the measure of responsibility. But when sin has entered, and as a

part of its penalty we become its bondservants and our very wills are enslaved, then the responsibility continues along with the inability.

It is also made clear by our theologians that, even in the acts of religion, there are many things that men dead in trespasses and sins can do and ought to do, along with this penal inability under which they lie, and further, that no man conscious of it who seeks deliverance through the grace of God has ever been turned disappointed away. The tragedy is gathered up in two words of our Lord Jesus, only a chapter apart: "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40); "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: . . . No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John 6:44, 65). The tragedy would be irretrievable but for the fact that in the second of these chapters it is also contained: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37.) This blessed assurance deserves to be brought out. It belongs to the work of grace in us, and we will appreciate it the more as we are able to realize how, by reason of sin, we neither can nor will of ourselves come unto God.

Christian experience as it is found under the work of grace in us fully confirms the teaching of Scripture concerning this spiritual inability. It could not be expected that any other experience would recognize these marks. The resistance of the sinful heart to this account of its deadness is only natural.

*Eternal Death.* The penalty of sin, separating body and soul, and separating the soul from the life of God, finds its climax not in this life, but in the life to come. Sin, begun in time, having often a casual or trivial aspect, affording a certain relish, reaches beyond the limits of time into eternity itself.

It can scarcely be otherwise. Moral facts are not affected by time. Conditions may change and ceremonials may vary, but right one day is right forever, while sin loses none of its force as the years roll by. This is the significance of the word in the last chapter of Holy Scripture: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: . . . and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Rev. 22:11.) Ethical distinctions are not worn down in the progress of time. Eternal death is the orderly sequence of spiritual death, unless a Saviour appear. The law of God, the moral law with its alternative to obedience, operates justly and deliberately but certainly, so that no new considerations are needed to establish the fact. The burden of proof rests on those who deny or doubt this final element in the penalty of sin.

Eternal death, viewed as the penalty imposed on sin by Him who is both just and merciful, to meet the demands of His righteous law, has, it is clear, no place for theories, widely current now, which provide that the wicked shall cease to be and that their punishment is no more than a deprivation of existence, a theory well suited to the man who has sated himself in this life and has no taste for the things of God. Nor is there place for

theories which assure sinful men that they may despise and neglect God's mercy here and expect a second probation in the world to come, a probation to be so mild that ultimately all shall be restored and the wicked shall be one with the righteous.<sup>67</sup> The opportunities offered by the grace of God to every man, everywhere, in every age, will in the Great Day be found to have been so ample that no man could have needed any more, while, free will remaining, there would be no reason to expect any other choice than that already made. The solemn words of our Lord in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus are enough to expose the falsity and the danger of such hopes as these. After the rich man had failed to secure from Abraham any relief from his own torment, he asked that Lazarus be sent to earth to his five brethren, lest they follow him, to which our Lord replied: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. . . . If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16:19-31.)

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<sup>67</sup>Bishop Gore, of Birmingham, dealing with a phase of what is called Modern Theology, says:

"The Christian teaching about sin, as it appears in the New Testament and in the Church generally, forces a man to feel that there is no limit to the disaster which, by his refusal of God and of duty, he may bring upon himself. Without allowing ourselves to close any possibly open question, we may say with confidence that the teaching of Christ holds over the man who persists in rebellious self-will the certainty of a ruin which may prove at last final and irretrievable. I do not think it is possible to doubt that Christ did hold this ultimate possibility over men—in metaphorical words no doubt, but in its unrelieved horror."

*The New Theology and the Old Religion*, 80.

## VII. THE PROSPECTS OF ESCAPE OR RELIEF FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

No discussion of such grave questions as these can be counted sufficient which stops short of the prospects for escape of relief from the conditions, humiliating and alarming, under which, by reason of its sin, our race has come. Human ingenuity and resources have been found sufficient to extricate us from many situations of danger and distress. What prospects of escape and relief do they hold out to men who are guilty before God, self-corrupted and stained by countless acts of sin, and burdened with the pain and sorrow which follow in its train?

At first glance, these prospects look bright. There is in our world so much that is good as well as true and kind that men are apt to assume they will, in some way, escape. This impression is widespread among all peoples and under all religions. That it is one of the delusions of sin does not lessen its influence or the demand upon us to sift it for what of hope there is in it.

*Prospects in Three Directions.* These prospects lie in at least three directions. One is by obedience to the law, a new devotion to duty, and a resolute attitude against the evils to which we are prone; another is by repentance for the sins we have committed and a sincere sorrow for the mistakes and mischoices by which we have been led astray; the third is by sacrifices, which serve to propitiate Him whose law we have broken. These three cover the avenues of escape and relief on which men travel to peace with God.

Each of these, of course, to have any value, must make terms with the law of God. No escape or relief which defies or even ignores it can be more than a dream. Our changed attitude makes no change in its demands. These continue what they were from the beginning and what they will be to the end of time.

The law of man, civil or criminal, has been cited as affording relief and escape. How far this avails may be gathered from the words of Prof. Sheldon Ames,<sup>68</sup> of University College, London, who, writing of the administration of human law, says, in substance:

“The execution of Law is always to some extent rude and unsatisfactory. . . . Various devices, indeed, are employed to correct the consequences of this want of refinement and elasticity. Such is ‘equity’ in the older sense of the term, enabling a judge to introduce modifications which carry out the general design with considerate regard. The next signal note is that of leaving to the judges to whom the actual execution of laws appertains the province of determining, with certain limits, the penalty to be exacted for the broken law. . . . A third mode is . . . the prerogative of pardon which is universally vested in the head of the executive. . . . If pressed to the full, the prerogative of pardon might imply practically a claim to override every law by the simple process of pardoning the transgressor of law, or of overriding such laws as might be inconvenient in their operation to the person in whom the prerogative reposed.”

This statement of the eminent jurisconsult may be taken as exhausting the possibilities of the case. It is at once manifest that “the devices” employed in human law have no place in the law of God. In it, there is noth-

<sup>68</sup>*The Science of Law*, 30.

ing "rude and unsatisfactory," neither is there any "want of refinement and elasticity." With God, justice is "equity," and "considerable regard" is infinite mercy. His pardon or forgiveness is not a matter of convenience and it does not "override," but conforms to the righteous demands of His law upon sinful man. The adjustments and the compromises which are necessary in laws administered by fallible men afford no parallel to the moral law, administered with infallible wisdom and unerring justice and abounding mercy by Him who is holy and true and good.

There is very little difference of opinion among our standard theologians on this point. Dr. Samuel Harris<sup>69</sup> said:

"If it were possible for God by almighty power to change or annul a principle, law, or ideal of reason, it would imply that He would divest Himself of His own rationality and would cease to be God. It would be God's annihilation of Himself. It would therefore be the annihilation of Reason itself. Then there would be no longer anywhere any distinction between the reasonable and the absurd, between right and wrong, between perfection and imperfection; the Universe would slump into chaos, and science and all human knowledge would dissolve into illusion."

Dr. Garvie,<sup>70</sup> answering Ritschl's statement that nothing needs to be done or suffered on account of God's hatred of sin, shows that "the universal and permanent moral order" demands the punishment of the violation of His law, and says:

"We have a moral right, nay, even a moral duty, to expect that, even in the manifestation of God's grace unto the

<sup>69</sup>*God the Creator and Lord of All*, Vol. I, 531.

<sup>70</sup>*The Christian Certainty and the Modern Perplexity*, 41.

forgiveness of sins, that moral order will not only be maintained, but will be manifested more surely and clearly than it is among the confusions of individual experience and universal history. . . . On moral grounds alone, we are compelled to seek a theory of the atonement which will not less, but more, adequately than all discarded theories, show that God is righteous in reckoning righteous the ungodly."

All proposals for relief from the consequences of sin are subject to these requirements of the law of God. It ought not then to be difficult to test their value.

1. Obedience. Obedience, the first of them, is based upon a sense of obligation to God and upon a claim to will power sufficient to overcome the natural tendencies of the heart. It is obedience moral in its nature, ceremonial obedience coming under the head of sacrifice. Instances abound in which men have lived lives of blameless morality and philanthropy and in which other men, once given over to evil, have reformed themselves and recovered the good opinion of their fellows. No question is raised as to this fact by those who regard man as totally depraved. The question is rather as to the value of the fact, as to the nature and extent of the obedience rendered, and as to the effect of the improvement that is wrought.

On the one hand, the obedience which God expects is not in conduct only. The life, and the character as well, need to be conformed to His holy law and, according to Scripture, it is beyond the power of the will of man to change the character. As shown above, we are by nature bondservants of sin. Job asked, "Who can bring

a clean thing out of an unclean?" And he answers, "Not one." (Job 14:4.) Jeremiah asks, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" and he answers, "Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. 13:23.) Our Lord said to Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6.) It only intensifies our inability to do God's will that it is not natural, as in these figures, but moral, and itself one of the consequences of sin. On the other hand, this obedience to avail for us cannot be merely partial and outward, but must measure up to the righteous requirements of God's law. Our Lord only repeated and endorsed the law given by Moses when He said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. 22:37-40.) Duty, then, is done only when heart and soul and mind are united in love to God and love for our fellow man. The young man who said he had kept all the commandments went away from our Lord, sorrowful because he lacked just one thing. (Luke 18: 22, 23.) The Epistle of James taught that: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10.)

On the other hand, obedience rendered to God's law must, if it save us from the consequences of our sins, stretch over and cover up these sins; it must needs be

something over, above, and beyond our duty to God, something to our credit as an offset to our obligations. Such obedience is said to be supererogatory, and is supposed to accumulate a store of merit on which one may draw when he has sinned. No warrant for such a claim can be found in Scripture. Our Lord teaches of the servant who had been ploughing or tending sheep that he owed a further duty in serving his master at the table and He asks: "Does he thank the servant for obeying his orders? So you, also, when you have obeyed the orders given you, must say, There is no merit in our service: what we have done is only what we were in duty bound to do." (Luke 17:9, 10, W.)

For these reasons, obedience such as man can render offers no prospect of escape. Far as it may go, it can never go far enough, either in its extent or in its nature or in its influence. So our Lord said of the class who were thought models of obedience in their day: "I say unto you, that, except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5: 20, A.) And of all Israel, the apostle Paul said: "They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Rom. 10: 3.) It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy that God saves us. (Titus 3:5.) This is the familiar and consistent teaching of Scripture, resisted in every age by those who would save themselves, but accepted by all who know

the demands of God's law and their own failure to meet them. It needs to be restated and applied in our day.

2. Repentance. Repentance, the second of the proposals made for our relief, is stated in its most plausible form by Dr. John McLeod Campbell<sup>71</sup> in his search for an equivalent, other than penal, for the dishonor done to God's law and name by sin. He says:

"Let us suppose that all the sin of humanity has been committed by one human spirit, on whom is accumulated this immeasurable amount of guilt, and let us suppose this spirit loaded with all this guilt to pass out of sin into holiness, and to become filled with the light of God, becoming perfectly righteous with God's own righteousness,—such a change, were such a change possible, would imply in the spirit so changed, a perfect condemnation of the past of its own existence, and an absolute and perfect repentance, a confession of its sin commensurate with its evil. . . . Shall this repentance be accepted as an atonement and the past sin being thus confessed, shall the divine favor flow out on that present perfect righteousness which thus condemns the past? or, shall that repentance be declared inadequate? . . . It appears to be impossible to give any but one answer to these questions."

The case, of course, is purely suppositious and is made out to meet Dr. Campbell's theory that the atonement for sin offered by our Lord Jesus consisted in His confession of and repentance for our sin. It is of interest here as expressing a belief not uncommon, that, in some way, repentance does offer relief and escape from the consequences of sin. This is the issue not only in God's law but in the laws of men. If repentance, that is, sorrow

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<sup>71</sup>*The Nature of the Atonement*, 125.

for sin, were an "equivalent" for the dishonor done to human law, our criminals perhaps might all go free. Sorrow for evil done, however genuine, is no repair of the broken law, divine or human.

Dr. James McCosh,<sup>72</sup> interpreting the experience of a man under the sense of sin, says:

"Repentance is undoubtedly the duty, and the instant duty, of a being so situated. But then, this repentance cannot make atonement for the previous neglect of duty. . . . Conscience continues to condemn the deed even after repentance and points to a punishment to follow. . . . It is just as conceivable that the conduct may be different. It may be doubted whether genuine repentance in the circumstances is within the native power of the human mind. . . ."

The supposition in this case is the more misleading as it implies a change which lies beyond the power of repentance to make. Spirits "loaded with guilt" do not "pass out of sin into holiness" and "become perfectly righteous" by any act or series of acts of repentance. This great change is the result of a process clearly traced in Scripture, and, while repentance is one step, it does not supersede the other steps appointed of God. Its function is not to satisfy the broken law but to restore the offender to a proper frame of mind. It implies that satisfaction has gone before and made it worth while.

Dr. William Cunningham,<sup>73</sup> of Edinburgh, recognizes that "placability" is an attribute or quality of God so that He desires and determines to forgive and to save sinners, but, he adds:

<sup>72</sup>*Divine Government*, 373.

<sup>73</sup>*Historical Theology*, Vol. II, 250.

"There is no particular statement in Scripture, and no general principle clearly sanctioned by it, which warrants us to assert that God's placability required of Him that He should forgive men's sins without an atonement, and upon the mere condition of repentance. Placability is not the only attribute or quality of God."

3. Sacrifice. The third proposal for relief is sacrifice. It is of all the three the way most used of approach to the being or beings who take notice of our sins and deal with them. This is true, however we may classify sacrifices. Even if some there be that are honorific and cathartic and commercial and deificatory and mortuary sacrifices, it cannot be questioned that others are piacular. Theories vary, and the literature is abundant. The conclusions of Wellhausen and W. R. Smith have been subjected to severe criticism, and the distinctive meaning of the piacular sacrifice is now generally maintained.

Writing as the result of anthropological investigations, Mr. Northcote W. Thomas<sup>74</sup> says:

"Whereas the god receives a gift in the honorific sacrifice, he demands a life in the piacular. This, according to Westermarck, is the central idea of human sacrifice; the victim is substituted for the sacrificer, to deliver him from perils by disease, famine or, more indefinitely, from the wrath of the god in general. The essential feature of the piaculum is that it is an expiation for wrongdoing, and the victim is often human."

It has also been shown by Prof. J. J. Reeve,<sup>75</sup> in answer to the theories of Dr. A. B. Davidson and Dr. W. P. Paterson, that the piacular sacrifice is a simple and natu-

<sup>74</sup>*Sacrifice*, E. B., Vol. XXIII, 983.

<sup>75</sup>I. S. B. E., Vol. IV, 2640.

ral act of hearts which realize sin and its penalty in death.

It is no part of the plan of this discussion to deal with these sacrifices except as they point to that sense of need of something to satisfy God's broken law, even when that law is only dimly known as the anger of some tribal god. The apostle Paul, walking through Athens, the intellectual center of the world at that period, was "irritated at the sight of the idols that filled the city" and he said to the men of the city: "The God who made the world and all things in it, he, as Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in shrines that are made by human hands; he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, for it is he who gives life and breath and all things to all men" (Acts 17:16, 24, 25, M.), and writing to the Christians at Corinth concerning Gentile worship he says: "I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils" (I Cor. 10:20). The historic sin of the chosen people was their addiction to the worship of false gods, as Moses said of them: "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not." (Deut. 32:17.) Even the sacrifices appointed of God by the hand of Moses were of value only as they pointed to the One Sacrifice of the Cross and the life of them redeemed by it. When Israel trusted in their efficacy, she brought down the stern rebuke of the prophets. The prophet Samuel taught Saul, the first king of Israel,

this when, after he had spared Agag and the Amalekites, he said: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (I Sam. 15:22.) Also Isaiah, in God's name asks: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats." (Isa. 1:11.) Micah, speaking for himself and his people, asks: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (Micah 6:6, 7.)

### VIII. THE CHRISTIAN CONSENSUS CONCERNING SIN

This consensus<sup>76</sup> is variously expressed at different periods in the history of the church by the creeds and confessions which have been adopted and put forth. These creeds differ at many points from one another, but it is noteworthy that, as to the insufficiency of human nature, they are in accord. It is also noteworthy that, whatever individual dissent there may be, these creeds stand today as expressing the belief of the bodies

<sup>76</sup>The *Creeds of Christendom*, by Dr. Philip Schaff, furnishes the text of the citations made, except the last two.

by which they are put forth. Leaving aside the earlier and ecumenical creeds, we find that

*The Augsburg Confession*, expressing the belief of the Lutheran Church in all its branches, in Article II, says:

“Also they teach that, after Adam’s fall, all men begotten after the common courses of Nature are born with sin; that is, without the fear of God, without trust in Him, and with fleshly appetite; and that this disease, or original fault, is truly sin, condemning and bringing eternal death now also upon all that are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit.”

*The Five Arminian Articles*, framed to express the issue with the Calvinistic Synod of Dort, show that the issue was not at this point. Article III is:

“That man has not saving grace of himself nor of the energy of his free will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostacy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do anything that is truly good (such as saving faith eminently is): but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through His Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the word of Christ (John 15:5), ‘Without me ye can do nothing.’ ”

*The Thirty-Nine Articles* expressing the faith of the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church of America include Article X, as follows:

“The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God. Wherefore, we have no power to do good works, pleasant

and acceptable to God, without the Grace of God by Christ preventing [old sense] us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will."

*The Methodist Articles of Religion*, drawn up by John Wesley for American Methodists, adopts these words as its own, making them Article VIII. Dr. Philip Schaff describes these articles as "a liberal and judicious abridgment of the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Calvinistic and other features being omitted."

These statements then may be taken as representing Christian belief in the bodies which adopted them.

*The Confession of the Freewill Baptists*, Section II, after reciting the effects of the Fall, says:

"Hence, none, by virtue of any natural goodness and mere work of their own, can become the children of God; but they are all dependent for salvation upon the redemption effected by the blood of Christ, and upon being created anew unto obedience through the operation of the Spirit;"

with which all the Calvinistic or Reformed creeds agree.

*The Westminster Confession*, dealing explicitly with sin in its origin in man, says (Ch. VI, Sec. I-IV):

"Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory.

"By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

"They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted

nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation.

"From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions."

1. The Declaratory Act of the Free Church of Scotland says:

"That in holding and teaching, according to the Confession of Faith, the corruption of man's whole nature as fallen, this Church maintains that there remain tokens of his greatness as created in the image of God; that he possesses a knowledge of God and of Duty; that he is responsible for compliance with the Moral Law and with the Gospel; and that, although unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God, he is yet capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy."

2. The Brief Statement of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America says:

"We believe, that our first parents, being tempted, chose evil and so fell away from God and came under the power of Sin, the penalty of which is eternal Death; and we confess that, by reason of this disobedience, we and all men are born with a sinful nature, that we have broken God's Law and that no man can be saved but by His Grace."

The Christian consensus, as held in the Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist Churches, so far as it expresses the insufficiency of human nature without the grace of God is clear, consistent, and conclusive. So far as these Christian churches know, we are in need of the grace of God. This is the question at issue in the present inquiry.

## CHAPTER IV

### Modernism and Our Need of Grace

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#### INTRODUCTORY

THE MUCH-USED term Modernism is in need of definition in every discussion into which it is introduced. Unfortunately our dictionaries do not define it as currently used. It may mean a temper, attitude, or method of thinking about religion; or it may mean a system of views necessitated by modern development of knowledge. It is in the latter sense that it is pertinent to our inquiry.

The term, however, is of less importance than the practice. If the Modernists are the brave pioneers of a new world, they are worthy of our loyal devotion and of any name they choose. If they are merely projecting upon us their own ego and are seeing our modern world only in the mirrors of their own minds, we ought, without hesitation, to protect the good word "modern" from so vain a use, lest we be caught in the disillusionment which inevitably awaits them. The question, then, will take this form: Are we really moderns or only modernists?

*The Modern Mind.* Prof. R. A. Knox,<sup>1</sup> after no little experience in his work at Oxford with actual men and women in the great problems of religion, finds that

<sup>1</sup>*Some Loose Stones*, 8, 9, 10.

modernist theology is concerned chiefly with the effect of science, not on its own faith, but "upon the faith of other people," and for this reason is at heart "apologetic." This is why, he says, it shows at times "such a cynical indifference to abstract truth." He asks: "Is it really concession the modern mind wants? The really modern mind?" Stating the questions which he has to meet daily, he says:

"They are not modern questions; they might all have been asked in the time of St. Augustine. I have never met (outside of Senior Common Rooms) any demand from questioners for restatement or accommodation of my beliefs to theirs; they want rather to know what the Church does say, in order to see whether they can accommodate their beliefs to mine.

"While theologians are trying desperately to reduce Christianity to those elements which it affirms in common with other religions, the really modern cry is to know wherein it differs from other religions; on what recommendation it proposes to enter the lists against them. And it is not as if, in 'restating' our religion, we made it easier to understand. Christianity made easy is by no means Christianity made simple. The ordinary doctrine of the Atonement is a thing you can carry in your head. . . . However difficult it may be to fathom, it can be stated on a half sheet of note paper.

"'Tell us what you want us to believe and we will see about it.' With full consciousness of the rashness of attempting to trace tendencies anywhere, I would still maintain that this is the modern demand. And it is not to be met by compromises."

The field of modern theology is evidently much more restricted than its scholars suppose. Its disciples are more audible than numerous; in the pulpit than in the

pew, in the professor's chair than at the student's desk, in the cloister than in the busy street and in the busier home.

*Representative Scholarly Modernists* are genuinely concerned for the interests of science, philosophy, ethics, and especially religion. Their concern is chiefly that religion shall not overstep the bounds set for it by science. To that end, they speak and lecture and write in the hope of finding the solution of the problems they face. Their views are worthy of respectful consideration, and whatever contributions they make, when tested and approved, ought to be acknowledged promptly and then incorporated in our body of real knowledge.

Regard is to be had for the sincerity and the industry of such men, and also for their liabilities. Their liabilities are of two kinds: One is that of gross misrepresentation by those who, as sincere as they, judge these views to be pernicious and charge them with opinions, and inferences from opinions, which they repudiate, often in vain. The other is that they are surrounded by zealous disciples, loud-speakers they are in the language of the radio, who, from a slight acquaintance with these writings and a still slighter knowledge of these sciences, rush forward to present their own interpretations and reproductions, with results disastrous to the cause of Modernism. Competent Modernist scholars, as well as the rest of us, have good reason to question the degree of intelligence registered by the popular interest in these productions. They are readily recognized and appraised

at their real value by careful thinkers, but the unthinking absorb them eagerly and quote them confidently.

*The Presuppositions of the Historic Faith.* If these pages have had any value, it is clear by this time that the historic faith does not hang in the air but implies, although it does not rest upon, the great facts of nature and human nature as these are brought out in the study of mind. That is, to understand and to estimate the historic faith, it is needful that the processes of consciousness and the valid results of reflection as set forth in science, logic, philosophy, and the ultimate realities be recognized. This does not imply that devout believers must undergo severe intellectual discipline because they are not troubled with doubt as to these presuppositions. Nor does it imply that Holy Scripture as the source of revealed truth is underestimated, for our very acceptance of it is conditioned upon these presuppositions. That is, one who denies them is in no mental condition to understand the significance of the historic faith. Further, one who questions them, and yet for emotional or practical reasons embraces the faith, dooms himself to a life spent in perpetual self-contradiction.

When Modernists venture to criticize the historic faith, they will be expected to qualify before their criticisms are of importance enough to notice. To qualify, it is necessary for them to pass a fairly searching examination on these presuppositions. In the language of philosophers, a theology can never rise above its ontology and its epistemology. In other words, one's theory of being and his theory of the knowledge of

being predetermine his attitude towards being, whether it be God or man, and towards the knowledge of being, whether it concerns the past, the present, or the future.

It is no long process to show how reasonable this is. The denial of any one of the outstanding truths of the Christian Faith, particularly those which grow out of its historic facts, such as the birth of our Lord, His miracles, His resurrection, His ascension, will, when analyzed, be found in most cases to rest upon the prior denial of one or another of these presuppositions. That is, the particular truth is denied because it belongs to a large class of truths which are denied. Obviously, the issue concerns the class and not the individual or the particular.

Accordingly, Modernists may not shelter their doubts behind some individual truth which they question. They will, let us hope, be able to stand out in the open and vindicate themselves from skepticism, anomianism, and moral anarchism. When they do this, their doubts about individual truths will be worthy of careful consideration.

*The Classification of Modernists*, of course, proceeds as the basis of their approach to these questions. That they must be grouped in different classes is made evident by the literature of the subject, with its countless avowals and disavowals. To charge upon one class the distinctive views of other classes would be unjust; to credit one class with the views of another would be unfair. These various classes may be indicated by the response they make to the questions concerning faith;

one class will give answer almost in the terms of the historic faith, changing what is called "the emphasis" and proposing modification in terminology only. Another class will adjudge the response to these questions, given by the historic faith, as either exaggerated or insufficient in the conditions of present-day knowledge, and will, on the facts presented, offer what they consider substantial improvements upon the statements of that faith, as it is held today.

Another class will thrust aside these questions altogether and will frame a statement to fit into a thorough-going naturalism, which, applied consistently, would mark the end of science, philosophy, ethics, and religion.

With the first of these classes of Modernists, the great body of Christian thinkers will feel sympathy, they themselves being often perplexed by the mysteries of religion. This sympathy will take form in showing those in this class that, throughout the ages, the historic faith has met their difficulties, not completely but approximately, and at least more satisfactorily than have any of the substitutes proposed.

The second of these classes will be met by Christian thinkers generally with the requirement that the improvements they propose in the statements of the historic faith shall be sufficient to cover all the facts in each case and to meet the demands of intellectual veracity, moral force, and spiritual effectiveness.

The third class of Modernists will learn that they represent a type, present in all ages of our race, which resents and resists the Christian or theistic interpreta-

tion of life. In other ages, this type has had enough moral vigor to avow its antagonism. If today this vigor has been lost and claim is made to the name Christian, they will find themselves met, not by compromises but by such challenges as God, through His prophets, has ever given to those who deny or defy or misrepresent Him.

*The Modern Laodicean* is liable to be overlooked in this issue between the historic faith and Modernism. Christian thinkers are more hopeful of even the third class of Modernists than they are of those who, while discreetly orthodox in profession and loud in the disavowal of Modernism as their own belief, represent the issue as of small significance. They call it a mere strife about words and deny that words carry any definite interpretation or have any serious ethical import. They emphasize the Christian life as against the Christian belief, as if life ever issued from anything else than the profound beliefs of the soul. They claim to hold, not doctrine, but the substance of doctrine, whatever this may be. They are concerned lest Christian belief hinder co-operation in important work, as if work in itself were ever important. They view the church as a corporation and measure its progress by accessions and revenues, so that whatever lessens these is injury to the cause. They promote church union, without regard to the beliefs of the uniting bodies, as if church union were of any value without Christian unity.

Churches imbued with this spirit have given great concern to our Lord, ever since He spoke to those of

Asia Minor through His servant John. To Laodicea, one of these churches, he said: "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16); or, more baldly, as in recent translations: "Before long I will vomit you out of My mouth" (W.); "I am going to spit you out of my mouth" (M. and G.).

No more severe sentence is pronounced in Scripture upon the open enemies of God.

*Candid Confession* on the part of those who maintain the historic faith is in place just here. It is to the effect that these representative, scholarly Modernists have only too good reason to seek a substitute for our faith, if they judge it strictly by the lives we live, or take us as models or exemplar-finished products of the gospel of our Lord. The truth is that the best of us are sinners at the best; that some of us are scarcely decipherable at times as "epistles of Christ" (II Cor. 3:3); that our only hope is in that wondrous efficacious grace by which He saves those who cannot and will not save themselves; and that, because we find that others are as needy as we are, we are constrained, at any cost, for their sake as well as our own to maintain that faith.

Reference was made at the outset to the emptiness of an "eclectic orthodoxy" (p. 58). It only needs to be added here that an orthodoxy which is at once rational, Scriptural, and practical never achieves, in the lives of us who profess it, its full influence. Humble-minded followers of our Lord, however great their attainments in holiness, are always the first to confess the difference

between their professions and their attainments and to acknowledge, with shame, that the charges of worldliness and self-seeking and unbrotherliness made against our Christian communions are only too true. Their sufficient answer is that, limited as has been the influence of our faith in our lives, it is the only influence which has effected a real, even if an unperfected change, and that only as it is maintained in its heavenly purity, in its rugged simplicity, and in its stern requirements, is there hope for us, and for our fellow men.

*Modernism a Term of Papal Origin.* Its first martyrs, Loisy of France, Tyrrell in England, and Murri in Italy, were all devout sons of the church, earnestly seeking her progress through the ultramontane movement and all duly submissive to the judgment of the Holy See pronounced upon their writings and their activities. The movement, in itself, was worthy enough. It was to bring Christian belief and practice into closer relation with the intellectual habits and the social aspirations of its own time. Few of those who may read these pages would confess that, in this sense, they were anything but Modernists.

The Modernist movement<sup>2</sup> in the Roman Church sought to develop the doctrine of the immanence of God—"His transcendent reality introducing itself into the world," to "make the Church the supreme organ of the vital religious tradition of mankind" and to deliver her from evil spirits, such as Fogazzaro's saint suggested, "the spirit of falsehood, the spirit of clerical domination,

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<sup>2</sup>Canon Alfred L. Lilley, *E. R. E.*, Vol. VIII, 767.

the spirit of avarice, the spirit of immobility." In this, many in other communions outside the Roman Church are profoundly sympathetic. The movement came quickly to its end by the encyclicals and decisions and ecclesiastical suspensions given by Pius X in 1906-7. Traces, but traces only, of its influence still remain.

### I. THE NEW OR MODERNIST THEOLOGY

Modernism, however, has more recognition among Protestants. There is no pope to issue bulls against it. Its literature multiplies rapidly, and its disciples are recruited from various Christian communions as well as from men of none.

Many writers, apparently ignorant of its papal origin, treat it as signifying only what is new and "up-to-date," "in step with the times." They emphasize its recent origin. They confess dependence upon the findings of natural science and they are not overparticular as to the competency of the scientist who does the finding. To many of these writers, naturalism is the necessary interpretation of natural or physical science. Religion must shape itself according to this pattern and then make out as best it can. Hence come the numberless "reinterpretations," "reconstructions," "old truths in new lights," etc.

It need hardly be stated that every serious thinker is ready to recognize the full extent to which natural law is operative and so, within proper limits, is in sympathy with this movement. Many modern theologians still believe in the supernatural, at least in theory, and so are not to be classed as thoroughly naturalistic. Some

devout Christians who have called themselves Modernists discover ere long that for them the word is a mistake. Here, as elsewhere, men are often better than their creeds and are entitled to an opportunity to prove it, remembering, of course, that having adopted the adjective, the burden of proof is on them.

The drift of naturalism in more recent years has been towards the recognition of religious values in nature and natural law, apart from the assumptions of a personal God as its creator and sustainer. The phrase "naturalistic theism" has been coined to describe this point of view. It is a point of view, however, which confuses the term theism which hitherto has been applied to a theory of the universe as created by a personal God; and until the fog surrounding this new humanism lifts it is useless to lift the theory to the level of present-day rivals to personal theism.

*New Light Welcome.* It is, of course, to be clearly understood that nothing of prejudice against what is new influences the judgment of those who believe in the grace of God. These are looking wistfully for the new light, which, as John Robinson prophesied, "is still to break forth from the Word of God." Much of the new in our day is precious, and if the new theology has anything to contribute, it will be received cordially. But, it must really contribute. It can justify its name only as it submits proof along three lines: that it is, indeed, theology; that it is really new; and that, after all, it is true. Names however great, phrases however apt, authorities however formidable, will not suffice. The issues are too

vital, the needs of men are too grave, and the grace of God too precious to permit a mere title to sway men from historic Christianity. With every desire to be sympathetic, we shall have to scan closely the numerous "interpretations" and "reconstructions" that are put forward today by the creed makers of the new theology.

Further, those who hold the historic faith need daily to remind themselves that, in a sense, a vital theology is always new in that it is the effort of each generation to state, for itself, in the light of all it knows, the unchanging truth of God. Bishop Gore,<sup>3</sup> speaking of our day, well says:

"The task which we have got to accomplish is that of going back upon our foundations, of distinguishing what is essential and permanent and really catholic in our religion from what belongs only to some more or less temporary phase of thought, or arrangement of society, or some more or less local association of belief and circumstance. These really essential and permanent and catholic principles and institutions of the Christian faith have to be detached from the decaying order, or the mode of thought which has become antiquated, and set to work afresh to prove their vitality in the new order."

*Modernism as a Projection of the Christian Movement into Modern Conditions.* One of its proponents<sup>4</sup> presents under the name of Modernism another approximation to naturalism. In its name, he repudiates "Liberalism," although not as emphatically as he repudiates what appear to be essential aspects of the historic faith. He defines Modernism, with characteristic Mod-

<sup>3</sup>*The New Theology and the Old Religion*, 6, 7.

<sup>4</sup>Dean Shailey Mathews, *The Faith of Modernism*, 15, 22, 23ff.

ernist vagueness, as "a projection of the Christian movement into modern conditions." He announces positively that "Modernism has no Confession." At the beginning, he gives six "aspects of the characteristics," and at the end, thirteen "affirmations," which, he says, are "more than the acceptance of Biblical records, ancient facts or the successive doctrinal patterns of the Christian Church."

One may feel ready to agree that his "affirmations" represent neither the Biblical records nor the doctrinal symbols of Christianity. This, however, only raises the question as to what he does represent. As an individual Modernist, he is, of course, conspicuous, and his opinions are of weight; but it is something more to represent and speak for the movement or tendency or state of mind which Modernism is supposed to be. We are, therefore, constrained to inquire as to the source of his authority to speak for Modernism. Whether it comes from his immediate academic environment or from his ecclesiastical connections or from some ecumenical Modernist convention is not set forth in the volume. Without this information, it is impossible to decide how far he writes officially and of authority.

#### *What Is Expected of the New Theology?*

1. It Will Meet the Demands of Intelligent Modern Thought. Modern theology, if it hopes to appeal to us modern men, will be expected to meet the demands of intelligent modern thought for order, progress, and sufficiency.

2. It Will Define Scripture. Modernist theology, secondly, will be expected to establish definitely its relation to Holy Scripture, on which the historic Christian faith rests. Chapter after chapter of its recent treatises on the subject are without references to the words of Scripture, though full of quotations from present-day writers. President Henry C. King,<sup>5</sup> after stating that the newer historical view of the Bible does not allow the theologian of the day to use it as it has been used, explains:

"Superficially, he may seem to be using the Bible much less; but a severe Bible student may at the same time be able to discern in a modest paragraph, that contains no direct biblical quotations or references, evidence of a careful comprehensive inductive study of a whole section of the biblical revelation."

Such "evidence" will be scanned closely. The eclectic method will not do. The problems with which religious men have grappled for ages may not be dismissed with a pleasant smile. The passages of Scripture in which these are dealt with cannot be discarded as out of date merely because they do not fit into a favorite theory. Christian theology in all periods has faced these passages bravely and given its best interpretation of them, tentative though it be. Modern theology, to improve upon what has already been done, must meet all the questions of the religiously minded in our day, however adverse it be to theological encyclopedia or to anything that suggests the systematic. In its effort to dis-

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<sup>5</sup>*Reconstruction in Theology*, 154.

solve the mysteries of faith, it must take care lest it manufacture more than it dissolves and lest what it does dissolve be at an expense of truth too great to be borne. Most men know that we dwell in the midst of mysteries and that these deepen as we approach the presence of God. Those great outstanding passages of Holy Scripture in which these mysteries are set forth demand of the new theology a treatment at least as nearly satisfactory as that given in the historic faith. *Ignoratio elenchi* is a vice which will not be condoned now any more than at earlier stages of ordered thought.

Dr. Carl S. Patton<sup>6</sup> thinks that no one, in the time of Jesus, thought He raised the dead or did those other miraculous things:

"It has often been asked, 'without the physical resurrection, what do you do with the empty tomb?' I do not do anything with it, nor with the body of Jesus. It is merely an item in the whole story and the whole story is the growth of a later time."

A physicist, a biologist, or a Christian theologian who tossed aside in this jaunty way the problems before him would not long be listened to. Modern theology may not "do anything" with any of the problems which arise in the study of Holy Scripture. It must face them all as they arise. However late the "story" be, the question, What of the empty tomb?, presses relentlessly with many others no easier for Modernist theology.

Prof. Chas. A. Ellwood,<sup>7</sup> however, affords the most striking illustration of this Modernist attitude to Holy

<sup>6</sup>*Miracles and the Modern Preacher*, A. J. T., Vol. XX, 1:102-110.

<sup>7</sup>*The Reconstruction of Religion*, XII.

Scripture. He attempts to "reconstruct" religion in "psychological terms" that he may establish what he calls "positive Christianity." This he thinks is "the religion of Jesus rather than the clutter of historical beliefs which have at one time or another assumed that name." In making this attempt, he announces:

"No citations are made from the Bible, not because the author has not a deep appreciation of the value of that book for the religious life, but because he would not profess to have any adequate equipment for technical New Testament interpretation, and even more because he wishes his work regarded solely as a work in applied social science. Such citations, it is believed, would add little, if anything, to the value of the book."

In this belief, the careful reader will probably agree with the author, but he will be forced to ask how a positive Christianity can be drawn from "applied social science." Had this author wished to "reconstruct" the science of medicine, he would not have ventured to leave out organic chemistry because he lacked equipment for "technical" interpretation. Had he sought to "reconstruct" jurisprudence, he would not have passed by without mention the decisions of the Supreme Courts of the civilized world. It is quite evident, then, that his "equipment" would serve him as well in medicine and in jurisprudence as in religion, yet he ventures out on a programme of "positive Christianity" for the family, for economic, political, and social life, and closes with "the opportunity of the Church." And such efforts are taken seriously by the unthinking!

Prof. Benjamin W. Bacon<sup>8</sup> points out very plainly the demand for full dealing with Scripture:

"So far as Liberal Theology has permitted itself to be diverted from its true vocation to such subsidiary purposes as this (the problem of the teaching of Jesus), it is high time it made confession of its failure and atoned for it by ceasing to confuse ethics with religion, and the Gospel of Redemption with the mere example and precept of a preacher of righteousness."

Modern theology, if it hopes to appeal to us modern men, will have to meet the demands of our faith in Holy Scripture.<sup>9</sup>

3: It Will Be New. Modernist theology, in the third place, needs to show that the teachings which it proposes shall take the place of the historic faith are indeed new and not mere forms of opinion which were discussed long ago and discredited altogether. To drag, out of the dust of the ages, old speculations and to give them a new dress, will have its effect only on those who, like a thrifty manufacturer of our day, "don't care for history." The history of Christian doctrine shows that what is called the new theology has failed to present a single religious idea which has not already been analyzed and recorded. Anyone who doubts this may pon-

<sup>8</sup>*The Success and Failure of Liberalism*, Y. R., Vol. XIII, 1:95.

<sup>9</sup>Principal W. B. Selbie has put this in plain language:

"Religion, as the churches know it today, is far too subjective a thing. It rests on experience, sentiment, hearsay, rather than on some veritable, 'Thus saith the Lord.' It is as though God were no more than our impressions of Him—a something, not ourselves, spun out of our own vitals, making for righteousness. So religion becomes a glorified expression of human progress, and ideas like revelation, grace, and redemption, have but little part in it. But if there is one thing of which the world is becoming very certain, it is that human nature is not necessarily on the upgrade. . . . If the churches really stand for a direct descent of God into humanity, for a living revelation and for a redemptive gospel, the sooner they make the fact quite plain the better."

*The Churches and National Religion*, C. Q. V., 249.

der *The History of Dogma* by Dr. Adolph Harnack, of Berlin, in seven octavo volumes, and, as he ponders, remember that Dr. Harnack was in personal sympathy with this movement. In line of this, Dr. W. P. Patterson<sup>10</sup> has shown that all systems which "have laid their spell on the modern mind were known in principle in the Graeco-Roman world" and that "no such addition of thought and strength has been made as must needs terrorize the Christian mind into capitulation." There is, he says, today no reason "why we should be crushed by the intellectual incubus, which was so easily thrown off by Clement of Alexandria, by John Chrysostom and by Augustine."

This is confirmed by the appearance of volume after volume announcing the coming of the new in religion. A fair sample is offered by Prof. Joseph A. Leighton<sup>11</sup> as his contribution "towards the New Reformation" and as a

"Prelude to the dawn of a new cultural synthesis which will mean a new religious synthesis, a new ethical synthesis, and a new social synthesis—one in which the light of science will be vivified and energized by the moral and humane values implicit in the works of Jesus and His greatest disciples; but a synthesis which will include the ethical and social implications of our new knowledge of man, nature and their inter-relations which are the fruits of science."

For at least thirty years, we have been looking for this "dawn," our eyes dim with the strain. Even the dark gray of the coming day has not appeared, much

<sup>10</sup>*The Crisis of the Church*, C. Q., Vol. IV, 679.

<sup>11</sup>*Religion and the Mind of Today*, VI.

less its rosy tints. The writers, one by one, pass along, but the same confident tone sounds through each of the various productions. One who follows literature of this type cannot fail to be impressed with the sameness which marks it all, both in its prose and in its poetry. The new day, we are told, is still ahead and as yet nothing constructive can be offered. The reason is plain. These writers are carried away with the naturalistic interpretation of biology and anthropology, and it regulates all of their thinking. It affects seriously their psychology, and it leads them to give scant heed to philosophy and to entertain very partial notions of Christian theology; and, without these three, the problems of the day can never be solved. Under such conditions, this literature will continue to be disappointing.

This same requirement appears in another form when the new theology claims, as its own discovery, some of the generally accepted beliefs of the Christian church today. Prof. William A. Brown<sup>12</sup> appropriates to the new theology the central truths of the Protestant Reformation, held by evangelical churches since the days of Luther and Calvin, and recognized as the source out of which our western civilization has sprung. He says:

"Protestantism is democracy in religion. It is born of faith in the inherent relationship between the soul and God, in the inalienable right of each individual to approach God for himself, in the adaptation of truth to conscience and of conscience to truth, in the efficacy and sufficiency of the Christian Gospel for all that man needs for his salvation, faith, and life."

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<sup>12</sup>*Modern Theology and the Preaching of the Gospel*, 19-20.

Likewise, President Henry C. King<sup>13</sup> at the close of his volume announces in italics:

"The first and foremost, the constant, the last, and the greatest study of the theologian, must be of persons and of personal relations."

These utterances, of course, are nothing more than the fundamental principle of the Protestant Reformation, by which the individual was brought face to face with God. One must ask himself, in view of these facts, whether these exponents of the new theology are familiar with the historic faith of the church, or if in their interest in evolution, Biblical criticism, and psychology, they have left it unstudied. However this may be, they will not be able to maintain this claim. It is difficult to believe that men of scholarship will venture to represent as new these great truths which have been the strength and the solace of Christian believers for centuries past. The "new" must be new, neither old speculations decked out in modern fashion nor accepted beliefs appropriated as a distinctive contribution to our age. Mr. Benjamin Kidd<sup>14</sup> recognized this as the abiding basis of Protestantism.

"The central idea of the Reformation was the necessity for a spiritual change in the individual, and the recognition in virtue thereof, of the priesthood in his own person. As Prof. Marshall states: Man was, as it were, ushered straight into the presence of his creator with no human intermediary; life became intense and full of awe, and now for the first time large numbers of rude and uncultured people

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<sup>13</sup>*Reconstruction in Theology*, 234.

<sup>14</sup>*Social Evolution*, 319-320.

yearned towards the mysteries of absolute spiritual freedom. The isolation of each person's religious responsibility from that of his fellows rightly understood was a necessary condition for the highest spiritual progress."

Modern theology, if it hopes to appeal to us modern men, will make an exhibit of what it has discovered that is at the same time both new and true.

4. It Will Meet the Demand for Moral Power. Modernist theology, fourthly, will be expected to exhibit the moral power contained in its principles and called into exercise in the conflict with evil, day by day. That conflict is upon us all, whatever our theories may be. The fact and the power and the process of sin, as set forth in the previous chapter, are to be faced and overcome, lest disaster and ruin overtake our world. To ignore sin, to explain it on any of the theories which relax our responsibilities for it, to restrict its range, to tamper with its penalty, to make it anything less than that wicked thing which God hates, does not change our situation. It confronts us in all its sinister ugliness and with all its portents of pain and shame. Can it be overcome?

Historic Christianity has met this question in every day,—never at full efficiency, but with enough to show that there is in it moral power. It has been parodied by its enemies and it has been disgraced by its followers; but it has met the pragmatic demand: It works. It transforms lives. It subdues lusts. It banishes vice and crime. It makes the lion and the lamb to lie down together. It fits the self-confessed thief to enter at once

the blessedness of Paradise. It turns the persecutor, breathing out threatenings and slaughter, into the suffering apostle of truth and love.

Men may criticize the workings of this moral power; but they cannot, in the light of history, deny it, nor may they reduce it to a merely human influence. Modernist theology, if it is to displace historic Christianity, must show a like power. It may not relax the rule of life without discredit to itself. It may not put forward decorum and sentiment in the place of saintliness and righteousness. It will, without doubt, be required of all thinking men to exhibit a power, ethical and spiritual, which will produce results at least equal to those produced, through the ages, by the historic faith.

Such an exhibit has not, as yet, been offered, at least, to public view. Instead, we have had programmes and combinations of political-social and class influences to bring about desired results. These results Modernist theology would have us accept as the fruits of Christian faith and hope and love. The spiritual, if not the moral, sense refuses. It will not be thus imposed upon. "Show us your power!" it demands in a voice that is stern in its earnestness. Modernist theology cannot answer. It stands impotent, as Prof. E. W. Hocking<sup>15</sup> says of classical idealism:

"Whatever doctrine tends to draw the fangs of reality, and to leave men unstung, content, complacent, and at ease—that doctrine is a treachery and a deceit. Note well that it is not pleasantness but force that sets the mark for truth:

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<sup>15</sup>*The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, XIV.

we have to require of our faith not what is agreeable to the indolent spirit but what is at once a spur and a promise. What do you think of hell? The doctrine of hell made religion at one time a matter of first-rate importance: getting your soul saved made a difference in your empirical destiny. If your idealism wipes out your fear of hell, and with it all sense of infinite risk in the conduct of life, your idealism has played you false.

"No religion, then, is a true religion which is not able to make men tingle, yes, even to their physical nerve tips, with the sense of an infinite hazard, a wrath to come, a heavenly city to be gained or lost in the process of time and by the use of freedom. The flesh and blood of historical contingencies cannot be sapped up in the timeless issues of a certain type of Idealism without loss of power, hence, loss of truth."

Christians of real personal experience, of influence among sinful men, will not shrink from these brave, strong words. As of idealism, so is it true of Modernist theology: "If it wipes out your fear of hell, it has played you false." The present situation in Christendom, under the shadow and within the walls of the Christian church, is proof enough, whether the agency be classical idealism, Modernist theology, or a cowardly orthodoxy. Nor will there be any change for the better until sinners awake to tremble because of their due reward under the Holy Law of God and to cry out for some power, more than human, to deliver them. And when they do this, they will not find it in Modernist theology.

Modernist theology, if it hopes to appeal to us modern men, will be required to exhibit and demonstrate a moral power sufficient to overcome the sin which we

know is in the world and especially within our own hearts.

5. It Will Meet the Demand for an Adequate Cause of the influence of Christianity in the world. This is not a demand for more ideals, for the world has been surfeited with ideals since the days of paganism. It is a demand, made in full accord with the modern scientific spirit, that Modernism, as in contrast with the historic faith, explain by causes within its scope, the rise and progress and influence of Hebraism and Christianity. Mr. W. E. H. Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, and Mr. Charles Loring Brace, in his *Gesta Christi*, have described this influence and have recognized the causes of it in the faith and hope and love which are engendered by the teachings of Holy Scripture as interpreted in the historic faith and as applied in Christian ethics. From the earliest days, the Hebrew people were on a moral level unreached by the nations around them. The teachings of our Lord and of His apostles as realized in the early Church were so potent that even their enemies said, "See how these Christians love one another!" The Protestant Reformation was the dawn of a new day in the recognition of the rights of man and in the use of nature for the good of man. The transformations being wrought on the mission field in physical comfort, in family relations, in education, as well as in morals and religion, increase every day.

The cause has been the same from the beginning. It is the teaching and the power wrapped up in the gospel both before Christ and after. In these lay that

mighty influence which ever dominates selfish interests, subdues sinful lusts, and leads men to love their neighbors as themselves. This is the "socialization" which has been going on in every age under the power of God in the hearts and lives of men.

The new theology is greatly concerned over the "socialization," but its concern is to socialize not the hearts of sinful men but the religion of the gospel. It has ambitious programmes and lofty ideals, but when it comes to show that such causes will produce the effects which have marked the history of Christianity, it breaks down. These are fine in theory but utterly impotent in practice. None know this better than those who, repudiating the teaching of history, undertake social betterment. These find that their methods may please and polish and varnish for a time but that they cannot reach the "inner" life or change the temper and the aims of those among whom they labor.

Modernist theology, if it is to appeal to us modern men, must satisfy us that the cause or causes it recognizes, other than those of the historic faith, are sufficient to produce the results which have come in the history of Christianity in individual, family, racial, and natural life. It must show sufficient reason.

*Ecclesiastical Casuistry.* In the ecclesiastical life of our day, young men, particularly, are encouraged to subscribe to the symbols of the Christian faith, with a view not of propagating it but of subverting it in the interest of Modernist views. To use a present-day phrase, they are "boring from within." Academic liberty with them

means academic license, and ecclesiastical liberty is demanded that they may set about the destruction of the household of faith. And, strange as it may appear, such persons often feel quite virtuous in their sinuous proceedings. They use the device of the double sense, having one assortment of views for public and formal occasions and another for their own coteries and for their promising pupils. In the pulpit they employ what they call "altar language" to set forth a faith which has no altar.

The answer to this casuistry comes first from a purely technical standpoint. Mr. Henry Sidgwick,<sup>16</sup> in expounding the utilitarian theory of ethics, puts in plain language his interpretation of this course. It suggests

"The pressing and demoralizing conclusion that no clergyman can possibly speak the truth in the sense in which a plain layman understands truth-speaking; so that any clergyman may lie without scruple in the cause of religious progress, with a view to aiding popular education in a new theology, and still feel that he is as veracious as his profession allows him to be."

Mr. Archibald Weir,<sup>17</sup> speaking for the honest men of the present day, says:

"The modern mind . . . has no sympathy with either a lax, lukewarm church or with men who distract it by occupying positions in it while repudiating fundamental tenets. It regards them as it would regard any other defaulting officers in any other lethargic corporation. . . . We declare that veracity and integrity are principles whose strict interpretation and maintenance must take precedence

<sup>16</sup>*Practical Ethics*, 155.

<sup>17</sup>*Criminous Clerks*, H. J. July, 1914, 747-9.

of any convenience that laxity may be fancied to bring to a church or a communion; and we find our moral position all the stronger. In a word, we have arrived at a stage when no conceivable advantage to religious teaching and organization can be allowed to legitimize any sort of debasement of the moral currency."

## II. THE PROSPECTS OF THE NEW THEOLOGY

The prospects of the new theology are not clear. It has been before the Christian public for some years and has won quite a number of adherents. High hopes have been entertained by some of its exponents for the spread of their beliefs and for the capture of the established agencies of the Christian church with the purpose of propagating these beliefs economically by saying both the labor and the expense which would be involved in building up an organization that was legitimately theirs.

These high hopes have not been justified so far, and evidences of reaction are beginning to appear. Men are qualifying what they wrote a few years ago and others seem almost to repent that they wrote at all. Prof. James Bissett Pratt<sup>18</sup> has written very frankly concerning what he calls the Liberal movement of the last twenty years. He believes that it has not been in vain and that none of those who have taken part in it would be willing to go back to the old days, but he feels constrained to add:

"If we would see clearly, we must not blink the fact that one of the effects of this emancipation of the human mind has been to weaken incalculably the foundations of religious faith for millions of Christians before anything very sub-

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<sup>18</sup>*Religion and the Young Generation*, Y. R., Vol. XII, 610.

stantial could be given them in place of what has been taken away. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, but we may as well confess to each other that the glowing promises which we of the liberal movement made to ourselves twenty years ago of a rationalized and newly vitalized Christian faith, which should fill the masses with a more spiritual religion and take the place of their old bondage to the letter, have not been fulfilled. The bondage to the letter is rapidly going, but the new spiritual faith is not spreading with anything like the same rapidity."

Dr. Chas. E. Jefferson,<sup>19</sup> who writes from full knowledge of Christian theology and also of modern theology, says:

"Some of us must rewrite our theology. It has been too sentimental. It has lacked moral stamina and grip. We have been misled by false ideas of what Love is and what Love does. Because Jesus declared that God is a loving Father we have assumed that He has no moral character and that men may disobey His commands with impunity. . . . God is indeed a God of Love. But He does not shrink from permitting men to suffer. He does not draw back from death. He is willing that men, if they break His law, shall suffer the full consequences of their misconduct. He will permit whole nations to writhe in agony, if they persistently defy His will. . . . Why should we shrink from declaring the unchangeableness and inexorableness of the laws which run through the universe of souls?"

It remained, however, for Dr. George B. Foster<sup>20</sup> to sound the depths. After a career as a Christian minister, he became a professor in a university and found himself involved in the blank negation of faith and hope. He professed great sympathy with young men and women

<sup>19</sup>*What the War Is Teaching*, 123.

<sup>20</sup>*The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*, XI.

who were being taught one thing in the classroom and quite a different thing in the church and the Sabbath school, and he would like to meet these persons "with their demand that the situation be faced with pitiless veracity." For himself, however, he sees nothing but this dismal outcome:

"We do not live in a day—so at all events it seems to me—when it is possible to proffer them the full and solid comfort and hope which warmed the hearts and illumined the faces of the fathers, theirs and mine. But it also seems to me that something can be done and that here even a little is much. And since they, like myself, would rather have a minimum that was sure than a maximum that was not, I have tried to do no more than to cleave to the sunnier side of doubt. And may there be light and warmth enough to keep us from freezing in the dark!"

The claim to theological novelty cannot be allowed for the reason that modern theology must meet the same needs which Christian theology has in all ages been called upon to meet, and Principal Selbie<sup>21</sup> has said very plainly:

"After all, the fundamental needs of human nature do not greatly change. Temptation and sin, sorrow and death are still what they have always been and the Gospel of the Grace of God in Christ, if it ever saved from such things, will save again if it is but set forth in the way that men can understand and accept. Neither criticism nor speculation can ever take the place of the word of power and hope in the business of saving souls."

*The Original and the Revolutionary.* Not only so, but in undertaking to meet human needs, if the new theology is to be viewed as a science, it must follow the

<sup>21</sup>*The Servant of God*, VI.

scientific method and must be content with scientific results. A parallel is afforded in the science of economics, and the parallel is of value even though economics is concerned with material rather than with spiritual facts. Mr. W. A. S. Hewins,<sup>22</sup> Secretary of the British Tariff Commission, informs us that it is always very difficult to decide how far a departure from the traditional forces and expressions of the main doctrines of economics is necessary or desirable:

"No one who is really experienced in economic investigation cares to emphasize the originality, still less the revolutionary character of his own work. . . . Economics is therefore, on the whole, an intensely conservative science, in which new truths are cautiously admitted or incorporated merely as extensions or qualifications of those enunciated by previous writers."

This is significant in view of the aversion of the new theology to what it calls "conservative" thought and of its ambition to be known as "revolutionary" if not as "original." Its literature sedulously avoids the methods of classical theology and exercises itself in the use of historic phrases for purposes of its own. Some of this literature reads like the logbook of a theological Christopher Columbus, sailing through uncharted seas in search of a new world. After long days of waiting, there is no land in sight and no strong-winged birds give hint that land is near. Some of the crew seem to be growing mutinous, for a difference of opinion arises as to who is the real theological Columbus, and the question haunts them, Is there really a new theological

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<sup>22</sup>*E. B.*, Vol. VIII, 906.

world ahead of us? Has the Christian world abandoned the results of the centuries of thought and conference and prayer to adopt something whose chief claim is that it is revolutionary? Or, is there to be a treaty of peace and is the world of religious thought to become a unit in active effort on the basis that two contradictories are equally true and either is a good basis for self-denying Christian effort?<sup>23</sup>

*Progress and Finality.* Mr. Chesterton,<sup>24</sup> writing of progress in theology, is not very encouraging to Modernists. He says:

"Progress, properly understood, has indeed, a most dignified and legitimate meaning. But as used in opposition to precise moral ideals it is ludicrous. So far from it being the truth that the ideal of progress is to be set against that of ethical or religious finality, the reverse is the truth. Nobody has any business to use the word 'Progress' unless he has a definite creed and a cast-iron code of morals. Nobody can be progressive without being doctrinal. . . . For progress by its very name indicates a direction, and the moment we are in the least doubtful about the direction, we become in the same degree doubtful about the progress. Never perhaps since the beginning of the world has there been an age that had less right to use the word 'progress' than we."

Another cloud upon the prospects of the new theology is the startling question, Whether, after all, it is not about a century too late? Dr. William Hallock Johnson<sup>25</sup> says:

<sup>23</sup>As to progress in philosophy, Viscount Haldane says of Aristotle: "He had the sense of ancient Greece for quality, and possessing this sense, he had an almost unrivaled gift for detecting unconscious metaaphysics and for dragging to light crudeness in philosophical assumption. It is not clear that our sense of quality in this respect has advanced beyond that of the great Greek thinker."

*The Philosophy of Humanism*, 234.

<sup>24</sup>*Heretics*, 35.

<sup>25</sup>*The Christian Faith under Modern Searchlights*, 125.

"The two systems of philosophy which were dominant at the turn of the century were unfriendly to theistic and Christian beliefs. Naturalism on the one hand and Absolutism on the other could find no place for a positive faith in God, freedom and immortality. The opening years of the century witnessed a revolt against these two systems; and the leading characteristic of twentieth century thought, over against an agnostic Naturalism and a pantheistic or impersonal Absolutism, has been its reaffirmation of spiritual values."

It really looks as if the leaders of the new theology will have to give heed to the warning of Dr. Dale<sup>26</sup> that, while the work of theological reconstruction must be done, it can be done effectively only at a period when the religious faith and ardor of the church are intense and when robust genius and massive learning are united with a sense of devotion.

A theology which is the creation of a poor and degraded religious life will have neither stability nor grandeur. We must all become better Christians before we can hope to see great theologians.<sup>27, 28</sup>

<sup>26</sup>*The Evangelical Revival and Other Sermons*, 21, 25.

<sup>27</sup>Dr. P. T. Forsyth has well said:

"We have works, journals, and chairs in theology which are absorbed, and often successfully and even brilliantly absorbed, in history, but strangely shy and unfamiliar in the region of such theology as unravels God's revelation of His ultimate nature, purpose, and thought. They cultivate or even parade a dogmatic indifference, a theological agnosticism. We are not irreligious, but we are not Christian. The whole type of our religion is anthropocentric instead of theocentric; it is more concerned with the growing personality of man than with the holy personality of God." *Faith, Freedom and the Future*, 270.

<sup>28</sup>Bishop Satterlee in defining the "Creedless Gospel" says:

"They have let down the bars and broadened their doctrines to reach and satisfy as many souls as possible; they have sacrificed the truth of Christ and lowered their standard of belief to attract the greatest number; they have vied with one another in their endeavor to popularize Christianity and bring out its social side; and the outcome of all this has been that, instead of spiritualizing the world, the world has secularized them. Their efforts have served only to cheapen religion and take from it the power that it formerly exerted over human hearts. They have given a false impression to the multitudes, that, with them, numbers are the first consideration and the truth of the Gospel the second."

*A Creedless Gospel and the Gospel Creed*, 171.

*Out of Its Own Mouth.* The new theology is variously stated by the scholarly men who espouse it, and, despite Dr. Gladden's warning, there is at least an approximation to a common view. Dean Shailer Mathews,<sup>29</sup> writing of the "Modern Man," tells us that "he is the child as well as the maker of Tomorrow"; that it will be difficult to overestimate the contrast between the age of the New Testament and our own, so far as the fundamental attitude of the social mind is concerned. "The modern age is primarily scientific and controlled by the conception of process." And this process, so far as it is historical and applied to religion, is "all but revolutionary." The modern man cannot conceive of any break in the causal genetic process. And this discredits miracles, except as they are viewed as "events" which, as in God's world, "are of His will." The modern man needs then to be shown that "there is room within the universe of forces he knows for the expression of divine personality in unique events" and, of course, "the burden of proof grows the heavier in proportion as an event is unusual."

President Arthur C. McGiffert<sup>30</sup> tells us that evolution has promoted substitution of natural for legal categories throughout theology. Death is no longer thought of as a punishment for sin, but as a necessary condition of progress. Life is pictured as an education rather than a probation, and future blessedness as an attainment rather than a reward. The doctrine of divine imma-

<sup>29</sup>*The Gospel and the Modern Man*, 35ff.

<sup>30</sup>*The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas*, 183, 203, 229, 233, 297, 301, 303.

nence, now current, has meant the bridging of the old chasm between nature and the supernatural. All nature is instinct with the divine, and nature and the supernatural are not two realms but one. Some "modern ethical theists" "think of the world as created by God," but on the other hand, to postulate a being who shall rationalize and guarantee our moral ideals, "does not necessarily involve postulating a Creator of the universe." Authority has everywhere ceased to be, as it once was, absolute, infallible, despotic, legal, and has become relative, provisional, and fallible. The ideal binds us, not as an external rule, but as an end which we freely make our own. There cannot be final and universally valid truths or forms of conduct, so long as the purpose is to be fulfilled progressively in a constantly developing world. If the old notions of authority still prevailed, Christians would be obliged to draw their ideals from the Bible and tradition and thus it would come about that such views as Dr. McGiffert has sketched "could gain no standing in the Christian community."

Mr. H. G. Wells<sup>31</sup> may not be altogether welcome to some of our modern theologians, but, according to Dr. Gladden, he cannot be excluded. Outlining to us, in his characteristic fashion, "the broad fundamentals of the coming world state" he finds that:

"It will be based upon a common world religion, very much simplified and universalized and better understood. This will not be Christianity nor Islam nor Buddhism nor any such specialized form of Religion, but Religion itself

<sup>32</sup>Note 12. *The Word "Evangelical."*

pure and undefiled; the Eightfold Way, the Kingdom of Heaven, brotherhood, creative service, and self-forgetfulness. Throughout the world man's thoughts and motives will be turned by education, example, and the circle of ideas about them, from the obsession of self to the cheerful service of human knowledge, human power, and human unity."

*Prompt Disclaimers.* It is easy to realize that an exhibit like this of the views set forth under the term modern theology is quite painful to some men who put themselves in this class. We may confidently expect disclaimers, vigorous, if not heated, of certain of these utterances. Such disclaimers can come none too soon and be none too explicit. Modern theologians may not, at the same time, run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. They will not be able to sail softly along the winds of Modernist doctrines and yet escape the rocks towards which these winds surely carry them. A return, cordial and sincere, to the historic faith, is the only means by which they can maintain or regain standing in the Christian church, whether it be Greek or Roman or Anglican or Reformed or Lutheran or Evangelical.<sup>32</sup>

*How Far Is the New Theology Theistic?* Startling as this question may be, it is forced upon us by the writers just quoted and others in sympathy with them. Their endeavor has been merely to present certain modern improvements in theology with a view to commanding it to the men and women of our day, and, to this end, they have accommodated their religious views to current scientific theories without any purpose of surrendering what they deem to be essential to religion.

<sup>32</sup>Note 11. *The Word "Evangelical."*

They ought to know, however, that in doing this they are venturing upon ground which has been perfectly familiar to scholars since the days of Plato, to say nothing of the writers of Scripture, and that they are using terms which have a recognized meaning. To be perfectly candid, these men are in no sense discoverers or originators, and they cannot play fast and loose with terms and phrases. They will be expected to accept the consequences of their theology or to show how, logically, these consequences may be averted. Nothing less will satisfy the men who today are discussing seriously the questions of this age. Asseverations of belief which cannot be justified on the principles they avow, will not go far. With the usual recognition of sincerity, something else is required by serious men. Those who adopt the naturalistic view and are "controlled by the conception of process" must explain what place in it is left for God. If everything is reducible to process, they must show where there is any room for personality, human or divine. They must understand the limits beyond which the historic use of terms forbids them, as well as us, to go. These requirements are stated not in any offensive spirit, but to make plain to modern theologians what they have chosen to ignore and what many Christian writers, in an excess of courtesy, have forborne to tell them plainly.

With all possible latitude of usage, the word theism implies a personal God, the source and stay of all created things, the Father of all who are endowed with freedom and initiative. It carries with it the divine inter-

vention in life and human life, according to infinite wisdom and love, with miracle as defined by Dr. McCulloch:<sup>33</sup> "occasional evidence of direct divine power in an action striking and unusual, yet, by its beneficence, pointing to the goodness of God." It maintains the real distinction between the supreme source of existence and dependent existents, such as we are. When the new theology proclaims the immanence of God, it is at once called upon, if it wishes to be considered as theistic, to show that its conception is, as Dr. Taylor<sup>34</sup> has said, "comparable with a real recognition of the divine Transcendence."

And finally, theism works out into an order or system by which the personal God enters into relationship and regulates His dealings with His personal creation.

Christian theology in all ages has complied with the requirements of this conception of theism, as its basis. It complies with them now. If the new theology proposes to displace it and claims to be theistic, it will be expected to show how.

*The Adjectival Method of Discussion.* In so doing, it will be understood that the adjectival method of controversy, so popular today in certain quarters, is under ban. Epithets, such as modern and medieval, liberal and conservative, dynamic and static, radical and reactionary, fundamental and modernist, traditional and progressive, scholastic and scientific, will not serve as reasons or arguments. A curious effort has been made by Prof. A. B.

<sup>33</sup>*E. R. E.*, Vol. VIII, 676.

<sup>34</sup>*E. R. E.*, Vol. XII, 262.

Wolfe<sup>35</sup> to draw the line among five types of mind, which he calls the reactionary, the conservative, the liberal, the progressive, and the radical. The value of this effort will be understood when it is known that the author, at the outset, announces "only one outstanding fundamental postulate, namely, the assumption of a consistent, deterministic view of Nature, man and his social relations included." He thinks that attributes, including conservatism and radicalism, are the result of complexes of instinct, emotion, and habit. He does not, however, tell us which complex produces the one and which the other type of mind.

This is, of course, not important, because all of it is the "assumption" of a mechanistic determinism. Neither the conservative nor the radical could be other than he is and neither could in any way influence the other or the final outcome of events. It is not surprising that our accredited psychologists are becoming wary of their zealous interpreters. Such writings as these serve only to confirm a growing impression that these various epithets, as used popularly, are valueless. They are merely the grimaces of the intellectually impotent, verbal explosions by persons of imperfect cerebration, which, while they do no good, do comparatively little harm. Possibly it would be more charitable to say that they are the inverted egoisms of our day.

The same writer has evidently absorbed the views of Prof. William James<sup>36</sup> concerning the psychopathic

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<sup>35</sup>*Conservatism, Radicalism, and Scientific Method*, Vol. IX, 144, 145.  
<sup>36</sup>*Varieties of Religious Experience*, 25.

origin of many religious phenomena to the effect that the neurotic temperament may be found to furnish the chief condition of the requisite receptivity, for he endeavors to trace a direct connection between high nervous tension and radicalism, quoting "Frink, an able psychologist":

"It is nothing to the discredit of any movement to say that perhaps many of its conspicuous supporters are neurotics, for, as a matter of fact, it is the neurotics who are pioneers in most reforms. . . . Genius and neurosis are perhaps never very far apart and, in many instances, are expressions of the same tendency."

This is the most serious reflection on modern radicalism that has been uttered in our day. Despite their high purposes, our radicals are all neurotics! Uncomfortable as they make us all, we must explain it as their neurosis! No reactionary, however egregious, has ever ventured to say this concerning any radical, however violent. If the charge could be sustained, we would have no need of libraries and laboratories and lecture platforms and magazines for our radicals, for we would consign them to psychopathic institutions, there to be treated under thoroughly trained reactionaries as nurses and attendants, in the hope that they might become normal again, and, if this be impossible, to keep them where they can do no harm, to themselves or to anyone else.

*Specific Inquiries* arise out of the statements made by the different authors quoted. With due regard to the danger of misunderstanding the writer, and with

the purpose only of eliciting his real meaning, inquiries like the following seem to be called for: If the modern man be the "child and the maker of tomorrow," what can we of today know of him? What relation, when he comes, will he sustain to yesterday? What will the world do until he comes tomorrow, if he is to decide upon the kind of theology we need? If theology is to become "biological and social," why call it theology? Or, if there be room for theology, why load it with material that is already so well cared for in biology and sociology? Or, should psychology become something else, physiological, for instance?

What evidence is needed, other than that which for ages has been before thinking men, to assure "the modern man" that "the divine personality" may express itself "in unique events"? What would modern men have to say to a man born blind who came to them with his eyes opened and told them what they should have known: "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man [who opened my eyes] were not of God, he could do nothing." Could they improve upon the methods of the ancient Pharisees who cast the man out of the synagogue? Are they less candid than the chief priests and Pharisees in council, who turned to one another, saying, "What do we? for this man doeth many miracles." Will these modern theologians cast out of their synagogue the humble Christian who rejoices in these "signs," knowing them to have been written "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son

of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name"? (John 20:31.)

If evolution has promoted the substitution of natural for legal categories throughout theology, what is the natural category for, say, obedience, disobedience, probation, penalty, judgment?

If "Nature and the Supernatural are not two realms but one," which one? Does the supernatural ever interrupt the processes of the physical world? Can the natural explain the personal, the spiritual? If so, what are the formulae for love, peace, purity, heaven?

Is the theory which dispenses with God as the creator of the world, really to be called theistic? Is it even deistic or polytheistic, or pantheistic or pluralistic? Is it not actually anti-theistic? Why should one versed in the use of words permit to pass unrebuked such violations of usage even if he does not himself espouse them?

If the authority which has now ceased to be "absolute and infallible" should, after all, appear as still absolute and infallible, what will happen to those modern men who "prefer" an authority which is "relative, provisional and fallible"? How far will their preferences carry them? How far, for instance, did his carry Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who had no liking for the absolute and the infallible One who doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay His hand or say unto Him, what doest Thou? Can those who prefer an authority that is relative and fallible expect a better fate than his? In practical life today, what type

of man, citizen, clergyman, is produced by such teachings?

Do the methods of the new theology, in dealing with the facts of Bible history, commend themselves to historians? If one can afford to "do nothing with the empty tomb or the body of Jesus," may the next historian "do nothing with," for example, the fall of Rome, the rise of the Holy Roman Empire, the Dutch Republic, the reign of Mary, Queen of Scots, the American Revolution, the Civil War, the World War? And if he may, what value is there in his pages? If the modern preacher "will have done with the old distinction between the natural and the supernatural," which becomes the other, or is there a *tertium quid*? Wherein is such a modern theologian better than Dr. Crile, Prof. Maudsley, or Prof. Haeckel, none of whom claim the prerogatives or the emoluments of the theologian? If Mr. Wells be unwelcome as an exponent of the new theology, on what ground is he to be cast out, seeing that no "notion" or "theory" dealing with the new theology may be "denounced as spurious"? Is it not petty sectarian bigotry to object to a writer at once so versatile and so voluminous? Is it possible that, despite Dr. Gladden, a creed has been framed and imposed on liberty loving spirits who seek only the truth, that a heresy trial, with all of its horrors, has been held secretly, and that Mr. Wells has been condemned by a modern Inquisition? If so, does this account for his present popularity? If not, why deny him a place among modern theologians?

If Mr. Wells is admitted to the select circle, why should any of them labor longer over Christianity or Islam or Buddhism? Why should not all, at once and together, begin to expound "Religion itself, pure and undefiled"? Others besides Mr. Wells have ventured upon this undertaking, why not make it unanimous? and really, Is the ultimate effect of his teaching anything more than an anticipation of the teachings of others of the new theology? If so, wherein?

These questions and others equally direct will meet the new theology at every point. They are not disrespectful; they give full latitude for reply, but they are intended to express the demands which men of intelligent faith today are making for reality in religion. The new theology resents the authority of the creeds and the symbols of the historic faith, but thinking men of today will not accept its views upon the dubious authority it offers.

Neither may the new theology expect men who are burdened with sin and sorrow and anxiety to be satisfied with palliatives instead of remedies or to await the theological "dawn" for which it is looking.

*The Supreme Issue* is faced by every thinking man of today. Does the Modernist theology meet the needs of the soul, of the community, and of the world, needs which are defined by law, natural law, moral law, love, and sin? That is:

Does it satisfy God's law?

Does it express God's love?

Does it deliver from sin?

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion: Findings

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THE FINDINGS of this inquiry ought, by this time, to be within reach, unless some branch of it has been overlooked, or treated inadequately, or overemphasized.

This inquiry has taken the following course: It opened with the question, Is there need of grace? This, unless answered in the negative, involves two other questions, What is the need of grace? How is this need of grace to be made evident? These questions call not for sentiments or opinions but for the facts based upon a standard or measure by which we may test ourselves and our fellow men.

#### I. LAW

Law is this standard or measure.

Law is natural, mental, or moral, so far as this inquiry is concerned. It has other applications which do not enter into this inquiry.

Law as natural, or physical, prevails over matter in all its forms and is a chain of causes and effects. Law, as mental, regulates our processes of thought. Law, as moral, is over all persons who are created with intelligence and the power of free choice. It is not a chain but a series of alternatives, calling for the choice of the individual as to obedience or disobedience and prescribing penalties in case of disobedience. Moral law has its

limitations and is unable to assure to those under it who obey it any certainty of a continuance of their free choices and the consequences which attend them. Holy Scripture, in one of its functions, confirms, corrects, and emphasizes the teachings of law—natural, mental, and moral. Holy Scripture in another function reveals God's love as distinct from God's law in relation to man as he originally was, as he now is, and as he may become under its processes.

The findings of the author, following this inquiry in its course, are, in brief, these: Mankind, human nature as a whole, needs the grace of God by reason of sin. This need arises out of relation to the law of God, His moral law. Our need, then, in the first place, is legal or forensic. This need is asserted by conscience, which is universal in human nature and relatively authoritative. It is reasserted by Holy Scripture, which, as infallible, is finally authoritative. Our need, then, is beyond dispute. Our need is aggravated by the refusal of God's love, which it implies, in this first offer to our race as a whole, and by the refusals, persistent and continuous, of individual men ever afterwards. Our need, then, is desperate.

This need, legal or forensic, beyond dispute, and desperate, appears in that: Sin affects, first of all, our relation to God, in whose image we are created, and in whose presence alone there is for free moral agents joy and peace. Therefore our need is to be defined as spiritual. Sin disturbs the mind so that it is blinded, the affections so that they are perverted, the will so that it is

disabled, and the body so that it is sick and suffering. Therefore our need is not only spiritual, but also intellectual, affectional, volitional, and physical. Sin reaches into every relation of life of every man—the family, the state, the church—and such others as grow out of these. Therefore the need is not only spiritual, intellectual, affectional, volitional, and physical, but is also social. Sin persists and develops in its deadly influence through all the stages of human life, here and hereafter. Therefore, our need is to be defined as not only spiritual, intellectual, affectional, volitional, physical, and social, but also, unless it be met, as eternal.

These are our findings as to our need of grace. They fix on each one of us the name and the character of a sinner and therefore they are very humbling to our pride. On the other hand, unless the method be invalid, and the conclusions erroneous, there is no room for resentment or denial of these findings, but rather for relief and joy that they are made known to us before it is too late to seek a way of escape.

Modernist theology, being undefined, has no relief to offer to human nature in its need of grace. Modernist theologians, speaking individually, and each one for himself, often indicate that they are dominated by a naturalistic philosophy which reduces human nature to the forms of natural law. These theologians indicate all too clearly that, under an evolutionary naturalism, they deny or dispute the authority of the primary assertions of consciousness, of the laws of thought, and of the ultimate realities. The result is skepticism, if not-

ing worse, and a theology based upon skepticism offers no relief to sinful men. Many of these individual modernist theologians indicate by their writings that they either deny or ignore the original state of human nature, the fall of man from that original state, the power and the penalty of sin under which, by the Fall, human nature came, and the present condition of human nature before God. These Modernist theologians are, therefore, insensible of the need of human nature, and, being so, have no adequate provision to offer for the relief of this need. Sinful men, therefore, are left by these Modernist theologians in a need as desperate as if they had never proffered their services.

These findings, stated in full recognition of the infirmities of human thought and the poverty of human language, at least so far as the author is concerned, are held to agree with the foreshadowings of conscience and the explicit teachings of Holy Scripture.

A merely intellectual assent to them is of little value in the face of that need. They are apprehended by the individual only as they are conveyed to and impressed upon his mind by the Spirit of God, of whom He who was at once the Son of God and the Son of Man before He left the earth said: "If I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, . . . of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged." (John 16:7-11, A.)

In the face of such findings, is there, anywhere, for us sinful men, an open door?

## II. GRACE

*Grace, the Grace of God, is that door.* It is a large door, and it stands open, open wide, to all who will enter in and be saved.

The grace of God is never discovered by the researches of men. No powers of human nature, however magnified, can find it out; so, judged by the tests of men, it is incredible in that it goes beyond what men would reasonably expect.

The grace of God, never discovered, has been revealed ever since human nature came to be in need of it. Man's first sin was followed at once by God's first promise. The history of man has been marked with the development of sin and by the corresponding development of grace as God's provision for the relief and rescue of sinful men, a provision which is at once loving, opportune, and abundant. Grace, therefore, is supernatural.

The grace of God is set forth in Holy Scripture as a revelation of His mind and will for our salvation. As such, the revelation is authentic, being duly accredited, intelligible, and sufficient. Were it less, it would offer no relief to our need.

The grace of God is more than His goodness, His love, His mercy, or His tender compassion. His goodness is over all His works, His love reaches to all persons who are made in His image. His mercy and His

tender compassion go out to all creatures who suffer, whether by their own fault or not.

The grace of God, in later New Testament usage, is that distinctive form of His love which is shown to sinful men, and it defines the specific meaning of that love when it is used in reference to sinful men. The grace of God, then, is His love for the unloving and the unlovely, His mercy to them who deserve no good at His hands, His goodness to those who have rendered Him evil and have themselves become evil. Had sin not entered into our world, grace, in this distinctive sense, would never have been known to us men.

The grace of God, as set forth in Holy Scripture, has the following aspects:

It exists, first of all, in the character of God, along with His wisdom, His justice, His holiness, His power, and His truth, awaiting the emergency, sin, which called it into exercise. Grace, therefore, is divine and we may properly speak of the Attribute of Grace.

It appears, first of all, in the purpose of God, who, in His love for the unloving and the unlovely, planned from eternity to meet their needs and to save them. Grace, then, is preventient and we may properly speak of the Purpose of Grace.

It includes within its reach every soul of man that is in need of it, according to his measure of this gift of God. It is, therefore, said to be common in the sense of universal.

It accomplishes both in the history of the world and in the souls of men that which God, in His holy pur-

pose, undertakes to do. In the salvation of them that believe, therefore, grace is said to be particular or efficacious.

It becomes a work, first of all, in that it meets the just and reasonable demands of God's holy law upon us in the redemption made by Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who did for us what we could not do for ourselves and who suffered what we deserve to suffer that, thereby, we might escape the due reward of our evil deeds. Grace, therefore, is, in one aspect, legal or forensic, and we may properly speak of the Work of Grace for Us.

It applies the work done for us to the hearts of individual sinners by the operations of the Holy Spirit in clarifying the mind, in purifying the affections, and in renewing the will so that the man, dead in sin, becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus, and, by the processes of grace, grows into the likeness of his Lord. Grace, therefore, is spiritual, and we may speak of the Work of Grace in Us.

It reaches beyond the individual soul into all the relations of life. It rectifies, energizes, and ennobles these relations so that sin is arrested and neutralized and its consequences are averted. Grace, therefore, is social, and we may properly speak of the Work of Grace through Us.

It is bestowed upon sinful men immediately and also mediately through channels carved by God Himself, such as the word of Holy Scripture, the sacraments, and

prayer. Grace, therefore, is conveyable, and we may properly speak of the Means of Grace.

It takes form in human society and they who receive it are of one body, the church, which, amid great variety, is one and which, in its influence upon the world, is God's agent in promoting the universal reign of grace. Grace, therefore, is organic, and we may properly speak of the Kingdom of Grace.

It never fails. As an attribute, it has been in glorious exercise ever since sin entered into human nature. As a purpose, it is always achieved. As a work done for us, in us, through us, it is thoroughly accomplished. As means it is always effective in them that believe. As a kingdom, it is in process of becoming established. It will be complete when the Lord Jesus Christ "shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.... When all things shall be subdued under him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (I Cor. 15:24, 28.) Grace, then, is victorious, and we may properly speak of the Triumph of Grace. This, unless human error and frailty have misled us, this is Grace, the Grace of God.

*"O to Grace How Great a Debtor!"* It is this grace which justifies, even among the self-restrained and the reflective, such outbursts as Scripture records. One as intellectually exact as the apostle Paul, when, at the end of sustained argumentation, he reached the grim conclusion, "God has locked up all in the prison of un-

lief," it was in order to the further conclusion: "That upon all alike He might have mercy." The vision bursts all restraints and he adds in rapture: "Oh, how inexhaustible are God's resources and God's wisdom and God's knowledge! How impossible it is to search into His decrees or trace His footsteps!" (Rom. 11:32, 33, W.) The flood of feeling overwhelms him when he exclaims: "May Christ dwell in your hearts as you have faith! May you be so fixed and founded in love that you can grasp with all the saints what is the meaning of 'the Breadth,' 'the Length,' 'the Depth,' and 'the Height,' by knowing the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge! May you be filled with the entire fulness of God! Now to him who by the action of his power within us is able to do all, aye far more than we can ever ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations for ever and ever: Amen." (Eph. 3:17-21, M.)

And, finally, John, the beloved, when a prisoner on the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, spoke in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, voicing for the ages to come the worship, humble but joyful, of men saved by Grace, when he burst forth: "Unto him that loved us, and washed [loosed] us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Grace be with you, Amen.

THE END



Debt Due

# ABRIDGED NOTES

BY REV. W. S. PLUMER BRYAN

TO HIS BOOK

## "AN INQUIRY INTO OUR NEED OF THE GRACE OF GOD"

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Five other "Notes" may be made available. They are entitled:

Pelagius and His Theory of Human Nature.

John Austin on the Fundamental Conception of Law.

Seneca and Omar Khayyam.

Naturalistic Religion In Its Full Development.

Being, Becoming and Personality.

Those who are interested should inform the present editor,  
Rev. Alison R. Bryan, Salem, N. J.

## NOTE I.—DIFFERENT KINDS OF LAWS

Dr. Charles Hodge<sup>1</sup> describes the different kinds of laws:

1. Laws founded on the nature of God—Love, Justice, Mercy.
2. Laws founded on the permanent relations of men in the present state of existence—property, marriage, parental and filial, superiors and inferiors.

These are founded on the constitution which God has seen fit to ordain.

3. Laws founded on temporary relations of men or conditions of society—judicial and civil laws of theocracy, distribution of property, punishment of crimes. Such bind only those who are in the circumstances contemplated.

4. Positive Laws—coming from the explicit command of God. E. G. external rites and ceremonies: positive, that the seventh rather than any other day of the week be set apart; moral, that this is a day of rest from worldly avocations.

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## NOTE II—“THE LAW OF NATURE” IN HISTORY

The Law of Nature is a phrase that illustrates the radical changes which take place in the use of words. Until comparatively recent time, it had no reference to what is now known as Natural Law and which is sometimes called the Law of Nature, meaning generally the world, the universe, the cosmos. It denoted rather the microcosm, the world within. Thomas Aquinas<sup>2</sup> (d. 1274) in his early day, defines it:

A rule of law is nothing else than a dictate of practical reason in the ruler who governs a perfect society. But supposing that the world is ruled by divine Providence, it is manifest that the whole society of the universe is governed by divine reason. Hence the plan of governing things as it exists in God, the rule of the universe, has the character of law . . . This manner of law must be called eternal . . . Since all things subject to divine Providence are ruled and measured by the eternal law, it is manifest that they all participate in the eternal law to some extent. But . . . the rational creature is subject to divine Providence in a more excellent way, being itself a partaker in Providence. Hence it has a participation in the eternal law . . . Such participation in the eternal law on the part of a rational creature is called natural law.

From the viewpoint of Jurisprudence, Dean Pound,<sup>3</sup> quoting Aquinas, sets forth the relation of Law and Morals and nowhere recognizes what has come to be called Natural Law. The Law of Nature, as he views it, is simply that law which reason and conscience prescribed for all men and which reached its fullest development in higher civilization. And it was what Blackstone meant as “dictated by God Himself”. It was what Burlamqui, Wolff and

<sup>1</sup> Systematic Theology, III. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Summa Theologiae, I-II Question 91 Page 9, Art. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> The McNair Lectures, 1923, University of North Carolina: Law and Morals, 1. 93. 97.

Pothier had in mind. Jurisprudence with its weight of authority merely ignores the effort to appropriate the terms it has employed for centuries past to other uses.

As late as 1909, Prof. A. Lang<sup>1</sup> used the term without a hint of its application to Physical Law. He recognized it in Grotius, as affording "one of the principal historical factors in the formation of the modern spirit:" he held that Rousseau's *Contrat Social* is "the last great manifest of Natural Law", and that the Calvinists were leaders in the Monarchomachist movement which "brought man's powers into the liveliest activity and undertook the most diversified tasks with vigorous confidence and so, with impatient energy, carried humanity forward on its way."

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### NOTE III—THE VARIOUS SENSES OF THE WORD "LAW"

Care must be taken to distinguish the use of 'law' in this connection from that which is common in modern Biblical criticism. There it denotes not law nor even the Moral Law, but the customs and codes of ancient peoples and specifically the law of Israel.

Prof. C. F. Kent<sup>2</sup> notes that ancient peoples, almost without exception, regarded these laws as of divine origin. The code of Hammurabi, the Egyptian, Greek (Demosthenes) and Latin (Cicero) and English (Blackstone) ideas are put alongside the Biblical teaching which is traced to "late traditions". He interprets Israel's legal history as illustrating five stages in the growth of law. The first is the period of relative lawlessness, when human relations are determined only by custom; in the second, questions of dispute are referred to tribal chieftains for decision; in the third is the development of a definite oral form of decalogues etc.; in the fourth, primitive oral laws are committed to writing; and in the fifth these are modified, expanded, codified and enlarged upon to meet the needs of a developing civilization.

It is for our Biblical theologians to pass upon this use of the word 'law' and these periods of its development. The usage, however, is to be distinguished from the fundamental conception of Moral Law, as an expression of the character of God, and, as such, ethical, universal and invariable, in itself.

The extent to which this law has been known among men and is known today, the comparison between the moral standards of Christian and non-Christian nations and the degree to which those standards are of practical force are all related questions, which do not affect this fundamental conception.

<sup>1</sup> The Reformation and Natural Law, translated by Prof. J. G. Machen, P. T. R., VII. 2. 179 ff

<sup>2</sup> Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents Encyc. R. & E. VII. 824.

#### NOTE IV—RECENT JUDICIAL DECISIONS AS TO LIBERTY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Philosophy and Religion alike in their discussions of liberty and responsibility will gain greatly if they will give heed to the decisions which come from the higher courts of law in the determination of liberty and responsibility. It has appeared in the text that the Moral Law is one and that human courts of law proceed on fundamental principles which are imbedded in it but only as far as their jurisdiction may extend. In view of the long history of jurisprudence and the application of its principles to the questions of our day, some of these decisions are illuminating.

In the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, District Judge James H. Wilkerson, in the case of the United States of America, complainant vs. Railway Employees' Department of the American Federation of Labor, in Equity 2943, in delivering his opinion, comments on the argument of the defendant, that to prohibit some of the acts against which the complainant seeks an injunction, is to deprive them of fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. "This contention has been answered by what has been said with reference to the unlawful purpose of the conspiracy". He then cites the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States<sup>1</sup>:

The cardinal error of defendants' position lies in the assumption that the right is so absolute that it may be exercised under any circumstances and without any qualifications; whereas in truth, like other rights that exist in civilized society, it must always be exercised with reasonable regard for the conflicting rights of others.

In another case, the Supreme Court<sup>2</sup> said:

No conduct has such an absolute privilege as to justify all possible schemes of which it may be a part. The most innocent and constitutionally protected of acts or omissions may be made a step in a criminal plot and, if it is a step in a plot, neither its innocence nor the constitution is sufficient to prevent the punishment of the plot by law.

Judge Wilkerson proceeds:

The record in this case shows that the so-called peaceable and lawful acts are so interwoven with the whole plan of intimidation and obstruction that to go through the formality of enjoining the commission of assault and other acts of violence and leave the defendants free to pursue the open and ostensibly peaceful part of their program would be an idle ceremony.

This is supported by the language of Circuit Judge Wood<sup>3</sup>:

The rule is familiar in criminal jurisprudence that any act, however innocent in itself, becomes wrongful or criminal when done in furtherance of an unlawful design. But whether or not, in a particular case, an injunction will be appropriate, and to what extent it shall go if granted, will depend on other

<sup>1</sup> Hitchman Coal & Coke Company vs. Mitchell 245 U. S. 229. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Alkens vs. Wisconsin 195 I. S. 194. 206.

<sup>3</sup> United States vs. Debs. 64 Fed. Rep. 724-763.

considerations than the mere wrongfulness or illegality of the act or conduct proposed to be enjoined. The right of men to strike peaceably, and the right to advise a peaceful strike, which the law does not presume to be impossible, is not questioned. But if men enter into a conspiracy to do an unlawful thing, and, in order to accomplish their purpose, advise workmen to go upon a strike, knowing that violence and wrong will be the probable outcome, neither in law nor in morals can they escape responsibility.

The opinion of Judge Wilkerson concludes:

It follows, therefore, that the motion to dismiss the bill must be denied. It follows, also, that the complainant is entitled to an injunction prohibiting the parties to this combination from committing the unlawful acts charged, the effect of which is to obstruct interstate transportation and the carriage of the mails.

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#### NOTE V.—RITSCHL'S THEORY OF MORAL LAW AND HIS CONCLUSIONS

No discussion of this question is complete without full recognition of the place and influence of Dr. Albrecht Ritschl<sup>1</sup> of Gottingen, who has impressed his thought upon so many religious thinkers in the present day. The treatment which he gives to the Moral Law in his chapters on the Doctrine of God (B IV) and the Doctrine of Sin (B V) is fortunately so full, and his conclusions are set forth so clearly, that this note will perhaps indicate his position sufficiently for not only this question but also for those which are to follow.

Ritschl distinguishes law from morality in that the one covers only those conjoint or mutual actions which render possible the existence of the State, while morality embraces the inward tenor of the will as such and all actions which the standard of law leaves undetermined. That is, in his view, law is Civil Law and Morality is Moral Law, and these narrow limitations of our common terms ought to be carefully noted. Moral law, he says, is that system which embraces those dispositions, intentions, and actions which necessarily follow from the all comprehensive end of the Kingdom of God and from the subjective motive of universal love (252). The moral law affords no basis for any expectation, such as follows from the civil law, that obedience to the universal law will be rewarded with the protection and furtherance of our individual rights; on the contrary, the moral law forbids us to reckon thus on a reciprocal relation between duties and rights. Moral law, then, with Ritschl, denotes, not that original relation between God and His moral creatures, one and all, but that relation which subsists between members of the Kingdom of God, which, of course, is one of Christian love.

The significance of this distinction appears when Ritschl undertakes to show that the analogy of civil law is "inadequate" to express our relation to God because, under this analogy God is compelled

<sup>1</sup> The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation. (Eng. Trans.)

to punish infractions of His law. Applying moral law to the state of man in Eden, he held it "unintelligible" that God could be compelled by His justice to punish our first parents with eternal death on account of their disobedience on "a well-known occasion", and at the same time to consign the whole race for their ancestors' transgression to a state of punishment directly contrary to His plan. "The transgression of our first parents was anything but wicked" (256). The Covenant of Works and the terms and conditions it brought in, have, of course, no place in this view. Accordingly, sin is very easily pardoned:<sup>1</sup>

"Sinners, upon whom educative penalties are laid, may without inconsistency be conceived as objects of pardon. But that the need for punishment is regarded as an obstacle in the way of pardon, and that in order to reconcile them the punishment of a substitute is accepted, is simply a consequence of the presupposed judicial character of the law. There is no immediate relation, however, between moral good and the moral act of pardon and legal punishment, whether it is borne by the guilty themselves or by their substitute.

This explains his view of our Lord. Jesus in respect of His birth was indistinguishable from other men and His worth lies in the manner in which He mastered His spiritual powers through a self-consciousness which transcended that of all other men. Whatever His work of reconciliation was, it called for powers no greater than other men had or might have. This is the foundation of Ritschl's doctrine of sin. It cannot be outlined here in all its intricate, metaphysical windings, its clever avoidances and its confident assertions. His conclusions are clear: The distinction between sin as ignorance and sin as final decision against recognized good is "thinkable" first of all as related to the conception of sin in general. Sin has no real end, either for the individual life or for the advancement of the whole. Ignorance also is not the sufficient ground for the confirming of the will in sin; for the will and knowledge are not wholly commensurate with one another. Therefore, neither (absolutely) nor yet in accordance with the conditions of experience is it to be denied that there may be a sinless development of life. The divine redemption or reconciliation is possible on the presupposition that there also exists a degree of sin which can only expect to be expelled from the world order. All these instances of sin are to be comprehended under the negative category of sin as ignorance. Even sins which present themselves to us "as a thoroughly confirmed habit of hardening" are to be put in this category. The conclusion is that God looks upon the sin of such men as ignorance, so that they are not past redemption.

The climax is all reached in his statement:<sup>2</sup>

The love of God can be conceived in relation only to such sinners as have not fallen into that degree of sin which excludes conversion of the will. It is just this negative relation that is expressed by the predication of ignorance—and nothing more. The presupposition of such a degree of sin in the case of others has just this much practical significance for us, that we ought to esteem them as capable of conversion. \* \* \* The

<sup>1</sup> Ibid 268

<sup>2</sup> Ibid 383

thought, therefore, is that the love of God to sinners, as the motive of His purpose of redemption, and as the ultimate efficient ground of their conversion, cannot be extended to those persons in whom the purpose of opposition to the divine order of good has come to full consciousness and determination. Whether there are such men, and who they are, are questions that lie equally beyond our practical judgment and our theoretical knowledge.

These conclusions are in close harmony with the trend of Ritschl's teachings. They anticipate questions which are yet to come before us, but they illustrate the weight we must attach to his definition of moral law. The view of Ritschl empties sin of its danger by including under sins of ignorance even "a thoroughly confirmed habit of hardenings", and teaching that all such sins are within the work of reconciliation.

At the other extreme, he teaches that God's love cannot reach sinners whose sin excludes conversion of the will, which, of course, puts sinners like Saul of Tarsus and many of us today beyond the pale. Finally, Ritschl's view cuts the nerve of the evangelical appeal by raising the question whether, after all, there are such men and by concluding that we cannot tell.

The self-complacent, ease-loving spirit will ask nothing better than this theology, for it hides from view the law of God. The heart burdened with sin which it knows cannot be excused as ignorance will turn away from this theology in despair just because it hides from view the grace of God.

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#### NOTE VI.—SOME RECENT VALUATIONS OF THE LAW OF GOD.

The valuation of the law of God presented in the text and shared by the writers enumerated in the preceding note and accepted by great bodies of Christians, is rejected by some men of devout scholarship and of wide influence in the religious thought of our day. This appears in their conclusions as to the need of grace, the work of grace for us and the work of grace in us. In them, as in all of us, the view of the law is regulative. To know their attitude towards it will enable anyone to forecast their conclusions on these vital themes.

Some of these valuations have been so long and so prominently before the Christian world that they need not be given again here, while others are so closely related to those noted that they may be passed over.

The names of Schleiermacher<sup>1</sup> and Ritschl,<sup>2</sup> for instance, occur to the mind as holding views of the law of God sharply at variance with those presented in the text. These profound scholars are well worthy of careful study but their general attitude has been presented so fully in these lectures already that further account seems needless. Dr. A. M. Fairbairn's<sup>3</sup> doctrine of the Person of our Lord, enables us

<sup>1</sup> The Christian Faith cf. The Theology of Schleiermacher by Dr. George Cross

<sup>2</sup> Justification and Reconciliation cf. The Ritschlian Theology by Dr. A. E. Garvie

<sup>3</sup> The Place of Christ in Modern Theology.

to gather sufficiently his view of salvation and thus of the law of God.

Sabatier<sup>1</sup> soon dismisses himself from consideration. He rules out guilt, merit, satisfaction, sacrifice, expiation as coming from creeds "anterior to Christianity."

Dr. Dale,<sup>2</sup> is not ashamed to deal with "austere" truths. In one memorable paragraph he sweeps away the popular theories that punishment is merely for discipline, for the public good or for the relief of offended dignity. "That the suffering inflicted is deserved is a necessary element in the conception of suffering" (443). "The sufferings which punish sin in this world, and the sufferings which will punish it in the next, are the expressions of the irreconcilable antagonism of God to sin, and to those who persist in sinning". (450).

The distinctive feature of Dr. Dale's position is that "If in any case the penalties of sin are remitted, some other Divine act of at least equal intensity, and in which the ill-desert of sin is expressed with at least equal energy, must take its place. The heart of the whole problem lies here. (451). Dr. Dale's point of difference with the view set forth in the text deals not with the law or the penalty of the law but with the mode by which the law can be satisfied in the salvation of sinful men. However we may differ with him on this point, his reverence for and his submission to the law of God assure that his memory shall ever be held in high regard by all who follow the guidance of Holy Scripture.

Dr. Horace Bushnell<sup>3</sup>, has been quoted in the text to show that like Dr. John Young, he holds that law and obligation do not begin with God's will and are not created by His will. There was "law before government". Accordingly, he holds that "there is no express sanction to vindicate the law absolute, and no definitely understood sanction". "Instituted government is for the sake of redemption". God's righteousness is "by obedience to a law before God's will." His justice is "by the retributive vindication of a law that is under and by God's will itself." "God must be righteous, He will be just". The justice of God is grounded in the wants of His government". Applying these principles, he holds<sup>4</sup> that:

There is, then, no such thing in God, or any other being, as a kind of justice which goes by the law of desert, and ceases to be justice when ill-desert is not exactly matched by suffering. \* \* \* There is no principle which any human being can state, or even think, that obliges Him, on pain of losing character, to do by the disobedient exactly as they deserve \* \* \* Perfect liberty is left Him to do by the wrong-doer better than he deserves, and yet without any fault of justice.

It may suffice to add that, however influential it was for many years, the stern experience of the civilized world during the recent war, will lead men to see that in the law of God there must be something more authoritative than Dr. Bushnell and his followers found.

<sup>1</sup> The Doctrine of the Atonement, Dr. Auguste Sabatier, Paris. 111 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The Atonement

<sup>3</sup> Vicarious Sacrifice 254 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid 270.

Dr. John McLeod Campbell<sup>1</sup> takes a high view of the law as such:

I believe that no modification of the law as law, in accommodation to man's condition as a sinner, is conceivable that could either give the assurance of the pardon of sin, or quicken us with a new life; and that all idea of bridging over, by a modified law, the gulf which we have been contemplating is untenable.

He adds that, if this is to be done, it must be by some moral or spiritual constitution quite other than the law and that this must honor the law and this requirement he finds met in the atonement.

Another instance is Canon Moberly<sup>2</sup>. He holds it "to be at the very root of the Christian doctrine that He, who made atonement between God and Man, Himself, in the fullest sense, was God and was Man". (p. 81). Yet he deals with the problems before him with no reference to the law. His index has no place even for the word. "The language of human jurisprudence is confusing. Accordingly, his first chapter is on punishment, his second on penitence, his third on forgiveness; and these three he regards as "primary terms". (p. 1). But are these terms really primary? Is not rather the law out of which punishment proceeds, in compliance with which forgiveness has its value, and from which penitence derives its meaning, the real primary element?

A later instance is Dr. Denney's<sup>3</sup> posthumous volume, containing his Cunningham Lectures. It is to be read in the light of his "Studies in Theology", "The Death of Christ", "Atonement and the Modern Mind". His statements on many points strongly confirm certain aspects of the historic faith, as for instance, his insistence on "an objective atonement".

Dr. Denney's volume opens with a chapter on reconciliation as an experience in which there are decided traces of Ritschl. Only when it is half done does he take up "The Need of Reconciliation". His conception of the law is not easy to find. It is embodied in two passages which occur in long paragraphs and in a form not likely to attract attention.

The law Paul deals with is "law in the large sense of the ethical necessities which determine all the relations of God and man. \* \* \* The divine righteousness \* \* \* is not revealed outside of, but within, and always in harmony with, the constitution of a moral world in which God and man live a common life" (167-8). "The law of God is not a statute; it is an ideal which defines itself through conscience in a form appropriate to each successive moment of our existence; and the obligation of it, as so defined, is never less than unconditional; We ought not to do any wrong for the world" (223).

It is in Dr. Denney's interpretation of punishment (208) that his valuation of God's law appears. We cannot compare "the positive

<sup>1</sup> The Nature of the Atonement and Its Relation to The Remission of Sins and Eternal Life, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Atonement and Personality.

<sup>3</sup> The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation.

"punishments" instituted and inflicted by human society with the inevitable reactions of the divine order against evil:

The latter are not positive; they are in a strict sense reactions. They are the sin itself coming back in another form and finding out the sinner. They are nothing if not retributive. That does not prevent them from being disciplinary or reformatory; on the contrary, their whole power to correct or to educate depends on the fact that they are retributive.

This is enlarged upon and "the hopeful penalty" is that in which the sin finds out the sinner and makes him see all that it means. Penologists agree that what "really prevents crime is not the severity of punishment but the certainty of detection". Under the divine rule, the reaction is inevitable: man can be sure his sin will find him out; retribution is as certain as wrong. "The reaction against evil is persistent, inexorable, absolute; when it goes on to the end, this is the end". (209). Dr. Denney's favorite term 'reaction' thrusts itself at once upon our attention. His use of it is almost incessant. Just how much he would put into it is not clear. We speak sometimes of a reaction of opinion but it is loose speaking, not in place in formal speech upon the profound themes of life. The word has its place in the physical, not the moral order. It applies to processes which are chemical, physiological or psycho-physical. To carry it over into the moral order is to ignore the fundamental difference between the moral and the physical, to impart an automatic aspect to a process which is essentially personal, deliberative and judicial.

Further, Dr. Denney blurs the contrast between the retributive and the disciplinary and educative views as to the ends of punishment. If God punishes to discipline and educate, it is one thing; only if He punishes because sin deserves it is His moral order maintained. This comes out in his account of the agony and the passion of our Lord which were penal "in the sense that, in that dark hour, He had to realize to the full the divine reaction against sin in the race in which He was incorporated and that, without doing so to the uttermost, He could not have been the Redeemer of that race from sin or the Reconciler of sinful men to God". His sufferings came on Him because "the world had sinned, and, in becoming part of the world, He stood committed to experience as its Saviour everything in which the divine reaction against sin is brought home to the soul" (273).

Dr. Denney quite freely pronounces "unreal" statements to which he objects. The awakened conscience of a sinful man could hardly find a milder term to apply to Dr. Denney's account of sin and atonement. If when Christ "bore our sins", He did no more than this, His work for us will bring no real relief. The avoidance of the "forensic", the non-penal valuation of God's law ends in statements hard to distinguish from those of Ritschl and Campbell.

Dr. Denney could feel no "pulse" in the Christianity of Canon Moberly. Does his own show any more? Not in his posthumous volume, but in his earlier writing. Fifteen years before he said:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Death of Christ, 286.

The words of the revival hymn, 'Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe,' have the root of the matter in them; and, however inadequate they may be to the interpretation of Christ's work and of Christian experience as a whole they are infinitely truer than the most balanced, considerate, or subtle statement which denies them. \* \* \* There is such a thing as pride, the last form of which is unwillingness to become debtor even to Christ for forgiveness of sins; and it is conceivable that in any given case it may be this which makes the words of the hymn stick in our throats."

These valuations of the law of God are widely held in our day and they are defended both ably and persistently. The bearing of them on the estimate in which men view sin and salvation is plain and it will become plainer as the doctrine of salvation engages our attention.

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#### NOTE VII.—LOVE AND GRACE

Drs. Thayer and Cremer in their Greek-English Lexicons of the New Testament have analyses of grace, to which the reader is referred.

The love of God revealed in Scripture and as distinguished from His grace is involved in current theological discussion more than is generally understood. This subject is not directly related to the present inquiry and so is passed by. Those who are interested will find it treated with great force and fulness by the late Prof. B. B. Warfield of Princeton Theological Seminary in an article on "The Terminology of Love" (P. T. R. XVI: 1, 3, 44: II, 202) and by Prof. Geerhardus Vos on "The Scriptural Doctrine of Love" (D. A. C. 713) and on "The Love of God" (P. T. R., I, II, 179).

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#### NOTE VIII.—LEGAL FICTIONS

The use of this phrase in connection with the covenants is evidently without adequate knowledge of its meaning in jurisprudence.

Sir Henry Maine<sup>1</sup> says:

Legal fiction signifies any assumption, which conceals or affects to conceal, the fact that a rule of law has undergone alteration, its letter remaining unchanged, its operation being modified.\*\*\* The law has been wholly changed; the 'fiction' is that it remains what it always was \*\*\* Fictions in all their forms are particularly congenial to the infancy of society. They satisfy the desire for improvement, which is not quite wanting, at the same time that they do not offend the superstitious disrelish for change which is always present.

<sup>1</sup> Ancient Law 25.

In the covenants, there is nothing to "conceal" and much to publish; no rule of law "undergoes alteration", but, remaining the same, it is employed for a purpose beyond law; "the superstitious disrelish for change" is ignored, for both covenants involve a change from what mere law could do. The phrase, therefore, can only be employed in this connection to create prejudice.

Drs. Sanday and Headlam<sup>1</sup> at the close of their exposition of Romans 3:27, 31, say:

This, it may be objected, is but a 'fiction of mercy'. All mercy, all forgiveness, is of the nature of fiction. It consists in treating men better than they deserve.

#### NOTE IX.—RECENT CRITICISM OF THE FEDERAL THEOLOGY

Much of the recent criticism of the Federal Theology is merely the repetition of that which has been made familiar in the history of Christian Doctrine.

Dr. F. D. E. Schleiermacher, as interpreted by Dr. George Cross<sup>2</sup>, taught that

Adam's nature was related to his own sin in the same way as our nature to our sin. The derivation of our sinfulness from the first individual act of sin committed by our first parents can never be an element of our redemption—faith, and a natural and unprejudiced exegesis of those passages of Scripture which are supposed to support that view will yield no such result. \* \* \* Wherefore the inborn sinfulness must have existed in the race from the very commencement (sic). Apart from this there could be no universal capacity for redemption.

This may pass with those who are willing to view God in a sense the author of sin as Schleiermacher does, according to Dr. Cross. For others the effect will be to command a view, which, with difficulties of its own, attributes only justice, truth and goodness to God and sin to man.

Dr. F. R. Tennant<sup>3</sup> of Cambridge, in his elaborate work, can give room to no more than the following concerning the federal theology:

It is only by replacing Augustine's theory of imputation, a curious anticipation of the realism of which we hear so much in later mediaeval controversy, by suppositions equally fanciful, such as the federal theology which would see in Adam our valid representative, without our acquiescence, in an arbitrary judicial compact with the Deity, that the theory of original sin has been even nominally reconciled with the sense of original guilt, and saved from referring the responsibility for human sin mediately back to the Creator.

Besides the question as to how well Dr. Tennant understands the federal theology, there arises another on which there is some marked difference of opinion viz: How far does he understand "Augustine's

<sup>1</sup> International Critical Commentary Romans, 94.

<sup>2</sup> The Theology of Schleiermacher, 183-4.

<sup>3</sup> The Concept of Sin.

theory of imputation" Both of these writers come into view when we consider the state of sin.

It is not within the scope of these lectures to review the criticism which proceeds from want of sympathy with the evangelical faith. There are, however, three representative evangelical theologians of our day held in deservedly high esteem because of their contributions to Christian thought, who, maintaining the reality of our relation to Adam and then to Christ, do not accept the Federal Theology. While they seem to occupy ground in common, each of them expresses himself in his own forcible way and, from these expressions, one may gather the full weight of the objections they entertain and estimate their value for ourselves.

In the order of time, the first of the three is Dr. R. W. Dale<sup>1</sup> of Birmingham, known everywhere as thoroughly representative of the best in British Congregationalism. Through more than five hundred pages, Dr. Dale nobly maintains the demands of God's law and the value of Christ's death as vicarious, representative, sacrificial and propitiatory. He seems at times to be about to recognize in his Lord, the federal head and representative of believers, yet he always veers away. He says of our Lord Jesus Christ:

"He has 'died the Just for the unjust' and has been 'made a curse for us'. This supreme act becomes ours—not by formal imputation—but through a law which constitutes His life the original spring of our own. \* \* \* He was not our Representative in a sense which would imply that because He submitted to the just authority by which the penalties of sin are inflicted we are released from the obligations of submission. \* \* \* The technical language of theologians obscured and even concealed the truth which it was intended to express. The Lord Jesus Christ is in very truth, by the original law of the universe, the Representative of mankind.

The second is Dr. A. H. Strong<sup>2</sup> of Rochester, who is of authority not only in Baptist circles but in other churches also in that his volumes are used in their theological seminaries. He says of the federal headship of Adam:

"We not only never authorized Adam to make such a covenant, but there is no evidence that he ever made one at all. It is not even certain that Adam knew he should have posterity. In the case of the imputation of our sins to Christ, Christ covenanted voluntarily to bear them, and joined Himself to our nature that He might bear them. \* \* \* Only on this supposition of Natural Headship could God justly constitute Adam our representative, or hold us responsible for the depraved nature we have received from him.

The third is Dr. James Orr<sup>3</sup> of the United Free Church College in Glasgow, who represents the best scholarship of the Presbyterianism of Scotland, and whose various writings are of value to Christendom as a whole. He admits that in the federal theology "there is a Scriptural idea at the heart of the conception" and that it both introduced

<sup>1</sup> The Atonement, 480, 489, 491.

<sup>2</sup> Systematic Theology, II 615 623

<sup>3</sup> The Progress of Dogma, 303.

the idea of historical progress and afforded to the divine purpose a dynamic character rather than the static conception of the eternal decree, but he rejects it as a sufficient explanation and says:

"It failed to seize the true idea of development \* \* \* Its most obvious defect was that, in using the idea of the covenant as an exhaustive category, and attempting to force into it the whole material of theology, it created an artificial scheme which could only repel minds desirous of simple and natural notions.

Coming to the "dark and difficult problem of hereditary or racial guilt", Dr. Orr says:

From what has been said in elucidation of guilt, it would seem as if the very nature of guilt lay in its being individual. I cannot be guilty of another's sin. On the other side, the fact has to be faced that, because of the organic connection—the solidarity—of the race, the penalties of transgression rarely are confined to the individual transgressor, but overflow on all connected with him. They descend from generation to generation, even to the extent of the inheritance of a polluted nature, and, on the above showing, of universal subjection to death.

Dr. Orr's explanation is that the innocent do suffer the painful consequences which are the penalties of another's transgression; that there are "public and corporate responsibilities in which all concerned must take their share, though the acts by which they are affected are not their own"; and that in the matter of guilt "certainty of spirit knits the generations together in one guilty whole".

These quotations are enough to show the positions of these three representative theologians. They deserve full consideration, yet none of the three theologians would expect them to be adopted merely on their authority. The question is, do these positions afford a sufficient explanation of the facts of sin and salvation? In answer it can only be repeated that no representative federal theologian presents the conception as free from difficulty. No view man can reach of the deep mysteries of sin and salvation is free from difficulty. Of the best of them, we are forced to say, Now we see through a glass darkly. But an explanation may be sufficient, even if it is not complete, and it is this which is claimed for the federal theology. The only rational course is not to magnify difficulties which all recognize but to provide, if possible, an explanation more nearly adequate. It is this which, so far, has not, in the judgment of federal theologians, been done.

In studying the views of these eminent theologians it ought to be noticed that none of the three makes an adequate statement of the federal relationship as it is understood by its advocates. If it were clearly before them, their writings do not indicate it, especially in the interpretation of the religious conceptions now so widely prevalent which are cited in the text. This is the more remarkable in Dr. Orr, as, in his church, the Westminister Standards, which set forth the Federal Theology, are of authority.

It is to be noted further that, while these three theologians hold strongly to a real relation between Adam and all mankind, they seek to explain it as natural or organic, and not legal or forensic. Dr. Orr deals with minds "desirous of simple and natural notions", as if the desires of men under Moral Law could exempt them from legal or forensic relations. The natural and organic is indeed the basis of the federal, but, without the federal, it affords no ground for the transmission or conveyance of either sin or salvation. If either Adam or our Lord Jesus was in any sense our representative, it was because he was so constituted or appointed. Further, if either was appointed, it had to do with the question of guilt, which is a question of our standing before the law, and cannot be taken out of court into the sphere of the natural or the organic. It does not alter the case that our age is thinking, as we are told, in terms of biology. Whether we will or not, we are under moral law and whatever is done for us must be within the sphere of law, must satisfy legal requirements, however unpleasant or hard they may seem. Men that break the laws of society have a natural aversion to the processes and the findings of criminal law, but we do not for that reason relieve them of the penalties of their offences. So of those who break the law of God.

To one familiar with the federal theology, it is a matter of surprise that thinkers such as these three should have stopped short of that federal relation which would have brought their conclusions to completeness and afforded ground for faith that was safe beyond assault. If the federal theology is at a loss for want of the support of men like these, it is not too much to say that their theology in turn betrays its lack of that which the federal theology would supply. The objection stated by Dr. Strong is dealt with in the text. It is not claimed that the covenants of works and grace were covenants in the same sense as human covenants or contracts. If a better word for the relation could be found, it would be accepted without delay.

Once more, it is to be noted that these views which are supposed to escape the difficulties of the federal theology lay the evangelical faith open to dangers far more serious. What are we to think of the statement of Dr. Dale that "the Lord Jesus Christ is, in very truth, by the original law of the universe, the representative of mankind"? Apart from the question how He could be our representative except in a federal sense, this question prompts others at once: Is Jesus Christ a representative by the original law of the universe, or by that grace which brought relief from sin? Is Jesus Christ the representative of all mankind and, if so, in what sense? These are questions which go to the center of the evangelical faith and on which evangelical believers ought not to be divided. The federal theology has but one answer to each of these questions and it rings true to the evangelical faith; its critics who are evangelical must needs make sure of an answer equally true.

In conclusion, recent criticism has not impaired the federal theology while religious conceptions now widely current seem to be pointing the way to a new acceptance of it, with corresponding benefit to the practical Christian life.

In the Oxford Conference on sacrifice and priesthood, Canon Scott Holland<sup>1</sup> of St. Paul's, noted the general agreement of the participants in the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice as "absolute and real" and, in reply to some remarks as to the moral significance of that sacrifice, said:

In relation to these moral meanings, I would venture to doubt whether the terms (1) bargain or (2) mediation, ought to be excluded as Archdeacon Wilson appeared to require. Surely (as Canon Moberly has suggested) the word 'bargain' is only the lowest term of that which, under moral transfiguration, takes the shape of a covenant, a bond, a transaction between two parties which places them under moral and spiritual obligations to one another. The conception of covenant—of a covenanting act—lies deep in sacrifice, and in the Jewish and Christian conception of man's relation to God. This might have its germinal expression under the grosser form of a 'bargain' (such as Jacob made on waking from his dream); but our interest lies, not in excluding the term, but in watching the gradual historical process by which it becomes spiritualized and refined.

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#### NOTE X.—THE HINDU ATTITUDE TOWARD SIN.

Dr. S. H. Kellogg<sup>2</sup> shows that, according to this faith, sin cannot accurately be said to exist, in that there is no personal God whose law is violated:

According to the universal Hindu belief, shared alike by the most ignorant villagers and by the most learned pundits, all that I am and all that I do, be it what we call good or be it evil, is the necessary and inevitable result of certain other acts of mine in a previous state of being, of which I have no recollection, but the fruit of which I nevertheless must bring forth, of whatsoever sort it be.\*\*\* Every act, be it good or bad, makes it necessary that I be again born that I may reap its fruit, and that personal existence in some form should be continued; for it is this, and not what we call sin, that is really the fundamental evil.

Notwithstanding this belief and the constant preaching of it, the sacred books of the Hindu have much to say of sin. Dr. Kellogg quotes the Sanscrit couplet:

I am sin, my work is sin, my spirit is sin, in sin was I conceived,  
Save me, O Lotus-eyed love, Remover of all my sin!

He quoted from the modern Hindu reformers like expressions: With what face can I approach thee? Shame cometh unto me! Thou knowest the evil I have done. How can I be pleasing unto Thee?

I went out to seek a bad man; bad man found I none at all;  
If I look unto my own heart, myself is the worst of all.

Rev. Alison R. Bryan, formerly of Sangli, India, shows the effect

<sup>1</sup> Priesthood and Sacrifice: A Report on a Conference, 84

<sup>2</sup> Handbook of Comparative Religion 48 ff.

of Hindu pantheism in the absence of the idea of sin. He traces this to the lack of a moral standard, the law of God, and says:

There is one phase of this question of sin, which has come to me with great force. You in America, with the background of Christian training influencing the thought of the people, even where they neglect Christ's principles, may overlook the most significant reason for the attitude towards sin. The Hindu religion has little, if any, basis in morality, certainly little in practice, whether much in theory or not. The worship of the gods, of which there are 330,000,000—more than there are people,—consists in an early washing in one of the sacred rivers, if possible, the application to the forehead of the mark of the various gods, which they choose to worship. \* \* \* On the return from the river, a little of the sacred water is carried in a brass vessel to the household shrine, of which even the poorest seem possessed. There, or at the temple, the water is poured out, when, Ganpati, the elephant-headed state-protector of Sangli, is worshipped or Maruti, or Shiva, or Krishna, whose most sacred River flows right by Sangli. Blossoms, flowers, a little rice, some sweetmeats, are always acceptable to the gods. When you have bowed to the ground a few times, no matter what your thoughts throughout the ritual, you have proved yourself a good Hindu.

Your moral life, your belief in the efficacy or reality of all this form, has nothing to do with your standing as a good and regular member of Hindu religious society. How can such open encouragement of sham, result in the quickening of conscience and the awakening to sin? . . . You see the difficulty; the need for a standard and then the need for the sense of falling short and transgressing this standard of law.

The moral indifference shows, somehow, on the faces of the best of the Hindus. The Brahmins have a haughty, indifferent expression that puts them above all ordinary standards and makes help or sympathy in the case of a poor outcast absolutely beneath them.

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#### NOTE XI.—THE WORD “EVANGELICAL”.

The word “evangelical” is often used loosely to indicate the opposite of ritualistic or rationalistic without any definite content. The nearest approach to an official definition in modern times is in the Basis of the Evangelical Alliance, adopted by the American Branch, which, in affirming its “faith in all the doctrines of the inspired word of God, and in the consensus of doctrines held by all true Christians from the beginning,” and disclaiming any purpose to establish a creed, but seeking rather to give “an indication of the class of persons whom it is desirable to embrace within the Alliance”, enumerate these doctrines in conformity with the consensus adopted when the Alliance was first formed in 1846, in London, which was afterwards approved by the separate European organizations, as follows:

1. The divine inspiration, authority and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.
2. The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.
3. The Unity of the God-head and the Trinity of the persons therein.
4. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.
5. The incarnation of the Son of God, His work of atonement for all mankind and His mediatorial intercession and reign.
6. The justification of the sinner by faith alone.
7. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner.
8. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord, Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked.
9. The divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The Evangelical Alliance is no longer active. At the present time, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America represents the effort "to express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian Church" and to bring the Christian bodies of America into united service for Christ and the world. Many evangelical churches are represented in this Council but as it is not limited to these, it affords us no aid in determining the meaning of the word. The nearest approach to a definite statement is the following, from the constitution of the Council:

In the Providence of God, the time has come more fully to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian churches of America in Jesus Christ as their Divine Lord and Saviour, and to promote the spirit of fellowship, service and co-operation among them.

—From the Preamble and Plan.

The Sacerdotal Churches hold to the Deity of Our Lord quite as firmly as the Evangelical and the Federal Council is intended to include them also as far as possible.

Dr. A. H. Strong<sup>1</sup> says:

Protestantism is the protest of mankind against the substitution of the Church in the place of Christ, and of the priest in the place of Scripture. Roman Catholicism had turned means into ends. \* \* \* The Protestant Reformation, on the other hand, dispossessed all these intermediaries between the soul and God. It insisted that every man must have personal dealings with Christ. He is not to come to Christ through the Church, but to come to the Church through Christ. He is not to take his belief from the priest, but from the Word of God. He is bound to read and to interpret the Scripture for himself, and he is personally responsible to God for the conclusions to which he comes. Church of England", says:

The term, however, has lost its freshness of meaning. Rev. W. N. Hudson<sup>2</sup> writing on "The position of an Evangelical in the

<sup>1</sup> The Great Poets and Their Theology, 273.

<sup>2</sup> The Churchman XXIX. 118, 769.

"This we might mention is a great characteristic of Evangelicalism—the belief in corporate prayer. Could anything be more Scriptural than the meeting together of fellow Christians to pray for one another and offer up heartfelt petitions to the Almighty? And yet, even among so-called Evangelicals, at the present day, a man is rather made fun of if he is known to frequent prayer-meetings."

Dr. B. B. Warfield,<sup>1</sup> however, writing of religion in our day, said:

The religious terrain is full of the graves of good words which have died for lack of care—they stand as close in it as do the graves today in the flats of Flanders or among the hills of northern France. And these good words are still dying all around us. There is that good word "Evangelical". It is certainly moribund if not already dead. Nobody any longer seems to know what it means. Even our dictionaries no longer know . . . Does anybody in the world know what "Evangelical" means in our current religious speech?

<sup>1</sup> "Redeemer" and "Redemption" P. T. R. XIV 2, 198.

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